

岡沢六十四

iii. 瀬菜モナコ



世直し**暗黒神**の
奔走
—人間好きすぎて
人間に転生した—

World Reformation Activities of the Dark
God — Loving Humans So Much, I
Reincarnated in One —

Arc 1: Light hero and Fire hero

by Okazawa Juzen

[Novel Updates](#)

Translation Group: [Reigokai: Isekai](#)
[Translations](#)

Epub: [Trollo WN/LN EPUB](#)



Chapter 00: Prologue

After 1,600 years, the God of Darkness had been released.

“...Hey there.”

“Long time no see.”

The one who first met him was the Light Goddess.

She is none other than one of the five Gods who defeated him in the battle 1,600 years ago and sealed him.

“So you were the one who released the seal huh. Moreover, you alone. That must mean quite a long time has passed already.”

“Yeah. The seal we -five Gods-placed on you, in normal circumstances, there would be the need of all five of us in order to undo it, just like in the time of the sealing. But it has already deteriorated. It had loosened enough for me to undo it on my own.....I will say it once again...”

The Light Goddess continues,

“It has been 1,600 years long, Dark God Entropy. My loved one.”

“...1,600 years. One thousand six hundred years?!” (Entropy) Digesting those words, the Dark God trembled.

“With that much time passed, the humans must have changed quite a lot. How are they doing? Have they evolved properly? You Gods have not interfered unnecessarily, right?” (Entropy)

“Good grief, you haven’t changed at all even after 1,600 years. Always going about humans, humans. You don’t care about me at all.”

The Light Goddess gave out a displeased atmosphere, but the Dark God didn’t loosen his words.

“In the battle at the world’s creation, you guys won. You wouldn’t understand just how anxious I got. Because you only saw humans as trash after all.”
(Entropy)

“You were the weird one for being excessively attached to humans. That’s why, in the fight 1,600 years ago, there were no allies on your side.”

“And because of it, I lost. I have no grudge on that part. However, if in the time I was sealed, you guys have treated them inappropriately, and have hindered their natural evolution...” (Entropy)

“You will begin it again? The battle...of Gods.”

Light and Darkness; the gaze of the two Gods clash.

“...Also, after a glance at the current world -maybe because of it being 1,600 years already-my heart is dancing to see how it has changed.” (Entropy)

“Fine. Then let’s look at it from above right now—”

“No...” (Entropy)

He stops the Light Goddess that was about to open the window to look below.

“Even if I were to look down at it from such a high place, I will only be able to understand the surface of it. In order to understand humans more, it would be nice to do it alongside them, standing on the same viewpoint.” (Entropy)

“What are you going to do?”

At the question of the Light Goddess, the Dark God answers with a smile on his face.

“I am going to reincarnate as a human.”

*

On that day, a new life was born at a certain house.

An unusually energetic boy. This married couple that was blessed with a child for the first time, named him ‘Haine’ and raised him with care.

And this child is the very person that had the soul of the God of Darkness who had fought with the five Gods at the world’s creation 1,600 years ago.

The story begins by the time Haine has turned 18 years old.

Chapter 01: Filial piety

I, Kuromiya Haine, am the God of Darkness.

More accurately speaking, a reincarnation of the God of Darkness.

The almighty Gods are able to change their own souls to a certain extent and reincarnate in the surface world with a body.

Released from the seal that lasted 1,600 years, I used these soul technique to become a human and fully enjoy the change of the world...I mean, observe it.

I will be repeating myself here but, it has been 1,600 years long since I have seen the surface world.

Just how much has it changed? Since my descent, I have been excited.

To begin with, if I had to explain why I was sealed for such a long time...it would be a story that goes all the way back to the creation of this world.

At that time, there was the cooperation of six Gods -including me-who created this world.

The sky was created, the sea was created, the land was created, and at the end, the people that lived in that land, the humans were created.

At that moment, one of the Gods said this.

“Let’s make humans the slaves of Gods.”

The one that went against it straight away was me.

We can’t do something like that. As living beings, humans are free. Even if we are their creators, there’s no way it is okay for humans to be ruled on the whim of Gods.

The opinions of the Gods were divided in two, and finally, it turned into a battle.

And so, I lost the fight and ended up sealed.

By the way, the Gods that were at the side of ‘humans are the slaves of Gods’ were all the 5 remaining aside from me.

Since they won, the living of the humans while I was sealed should have been a rough one where they were bounded by the subordination of the Gods.

Even so, I believed. Humans will push through difficulties and evolve in a way that only they can achieve.

Humans are strong. And they are deeply prudent...and kind.

And so, I have been reborn as a human and am living alongside them.

In order to fully enjoy this world that I haven't seen for 1,600 years.

The place I was reborn as a human in was a mountain village that can be considered a remote region. There, I received a new body as the sole son of a normal married couple.

My father is a hunter. Well, even if I say so, at a small village, hunting doesn't bring much income, so he also gathers firewood, picks edible wild plants, and acts more like a jack-of-all-trades in terms of the forest.

Even so, his skills are good. At times, he also hunts the harmful beasts that devastate the fields, monsters, and he has gained the goodwill of the villagers.

And I, as his son, am seen as the one who will be following my father's steps to become a hunter.

I myself think that's fine.

Even if I don't leave this small village for the rest of my life, this is also a way of living for humans.

The God of Darkness enjoys the life of a normal human, and dies.

That's what I thought.

Until this day came...

*

With only the sound of cutting wind, the arrow flew.

The arrow hits the wild boar without err, and so, the boar that has been destroying the fields these last few days made a cry of agony and falls.

"I did it!"

Confirming the hit, I run towards the fallen game.

The wild boar had already died, so there was no need to deal the finishing blow.

Father also comes after he puts away his readied bow.

“You brought it down splendidly, Haine. There was no need for Dad to shoot a second shot.”

“In no way. It was because I knew that father would bring it down even if I were to miss that I was able to shoot with peace of mind.” (Haine)

【世直し暗黒神の奔走キャララフ
：ハイネ】



Even so, the happiness of bringing down a game was big.

“Father, let’s quickly take it apart. The meat is filled with nutrients, so we have to let mother eat it!” (Haine)

“Haine, there’s something you have to do before that, right?”

When father pointed it out, I noticed, and I hurriedly put my bow aside and kneel down.

And then, I place my hands together at the boar that had now become a corpse, and pray towards the life that was lost. This is a forest rule that hunters share.

“...Okay then, let’s begin the dismantling. From here, the closest water source would be...”

“Over here father!” (Haine)

Pointing the direction where the river is at based on my memories, I take the initiative of carrying the game on my back and began walking.

The dismantling will have a lot of blood flowing, so it is indispensable to have a lot of water in order to wash it away. In that way, we can divide the eatable meat from the hide and bones that can be useful, the fat that can also be used as fuel, and it also makes it easier to carry.

“Haine has...already become a splendid man.”

“That’s not the case. There’s still a lot of things I want father to teach me.” (Haine)

“No, there’s practically nothing for me to teach you anymore. You are...too good of a son for a countryside couple like us. And so, I thought this but—”

“Wait a moment.” (Haine)

Father was in the middle of speaking, but I who had found something, entrusted the game to father and crouched on the ground.

The ground that had grass growing heftily in this forest.

“This medicinal plant...if I remember correctly, it works with heart diseases. I was taught that by the pharmacist, Ribe-san.” (Haine)

“You, you even learned that...”

“When we return to the village, let’s have Ribe-san compound it. It might ease the illness of mother.” (Haine)

After I place the plucked medicinal plant in between oiled paper and put it away, I once again carry the game and head to the water source.

Arriving at the place, I cooperate with father and swiftly finish the dismantling, and so, the job is done.

Settling the request from the village chief to subjugate the harmful beast, we are finally able to return to our house after 2 days.

“Father, how much boar meat will we be selling? Leave enough portion for us to eat at home, okay? We will have mother eat it after all.” (Haine)

“Yeah, I know.”

“But money is necessary too. We have to buy the medicine for mother. Even if we can save some with the medicinal plant we plucked just now, it would still be...” (Haine)

While thinking that, something happened as we advanced through the forest. Father and I noticed it.

This turbulent atmosphere as we got closer to the village.

Chapter 02: Youth Hunt

“What is this?!”

When we returned, the village was filled with abnormality.

A deserted village that doesn't even reach the fifties with all members together. And yet, at that place, there were over a hundred people crowded there.

It was clear that a group had come to this village from the outside.

As proof of it, the people that came from the outside wore white shining armor and had a different look from the villagers.

The problem is that the bunch that wore white shining armor were clearly acting in a pressuring manner towards the villagers.

“Gather all the villagers! Especially the young ones that are between 10 to 20 years old! Don't let a single one escape!!”

The man that seems to be leading the armored people was giving orders as saliva flew out of his mouth.

The armored people -most likely knights-had already taken out their swords and spears, and urging forward the villagers by pointing at them with it. They are totally threatening them.

It seems like these guys are gathering the villagers somewhere.

The people inside the houses were being dragged out, forcefully whether they agreed or not.

Father and I noticed this abnormal event from the outside of the village, and we are currently hiding at the forest, observing the situation.

Because we were out hunting, we didn't have to face this abnormality head on.

“Just who are these guys?!” (Haine)

“They probably came from the city. Such tidy bunch, there's no way they

would be from around here.”

Father must be saying that after seeing the shininess of that armor.

I also think the same way. On top of that, I bring out memories, that came from another place that were not from Kuromiya Haine, and had an idea of their identities.

The knights that were covered in full armor.

Those knights not only have swords and spears, there’s also flags raised up as if displaying who they were.

The coat of arms that was engraved in the flags, there’s no doubt, it is the symbol of the Light Goddess, Inflation.

(Why is the crest of the Light Goddess engraved in the flag of these humans?)

From the memories of my time as a Dark God, I had an idea of what that coat of arms was.

It has been 18 years since I reincarnated as a human. In that time, I haven’t left the village once. Not having interest in the ways of the world has come to bite me.

“...Haine, at any rate, let’s go to the place of the village chief, and then, we will ask what’s happening—”

“Wait, father!” (Haine)

I hurriedly grab the arm of father who had come out from the bushes and was about to enter the village.

“Father, we are outside the village and they haven’t noticed us. If we go now, they will find us and we will end up the same way as the others.” (Haine)

“Y-Yeah...”

“As long as we haven’t made clear what the objective of those knights is, it is better not to move recklessly. Depending on how the events develop, it might become a plus that we are hiding here.” (Haine)

“I see... that’s true.”

It seems father has listened to my opinion, he bends his body again, and went

back to the shadow of the trees.

“It is just as you say. Seriously, even though you are the son here, you say things that make me think you are the older one.”

“That’s not true. I am father’s son.” (Haine)

But...

“Father, this may sound weird after I told you not to move but...how about we move?” (Haine)

“I know. I have been worried about that too.”

Father and I went around the outside of the village, taking care not to be noticed by the knights, and change locations.

It is fortunate that this is a remote village at the mountain recesses, the surroundings of the village are mostly forest.

And so, the place we moved to was our house within the village.

Right now, mother should be alone in the house.

Mother has had a weak body since long ago, and that’s why, this unusual event makes it even more worrying.

While we are hiding in the forest, we can’t check inside the house because of the distance.

In the time I was thinking about how to deal with this, a clamorous noise was heard from inside the house.

“Come out immediately! The Light Goddess calls!”

Mother was dragged out from the house by an armored knight.

The complexion of her face was clearly bad. Her condition was probably not good today either and was laying down on the bed.

The body of mother was weak since the beginning, and she had given birth to me when she was already over the age.

She had a constitution that made it hard to have a baby, and in truth, this body of mine should have been a stillbirth.

The body is the vessel of the soul.

Since I had to take the vessel of a soul, in my time as a Dark God, I decided on a stillbirth when I descended.

Even if it was a stillbirth, if it is a God, it is possible to heal the parts that had become bad and be reborn. However, I who was born in that way, had made my father and mother one step happier than normal, and had been raised with care.

A child that they would hardly be blessed with because of illness. Moreover, they were told that it would be a stillbirth beforehand, and yet, a child was still birthed, so that must have made it even bigger for them.

By the time I became 1 year old, there was a time when I spend almost a whole day walking at the outside of the village.

My body had grown enough to walk on my two legs, so I wanted to check out the surface world.

Even if it was the body of a baby, for me who's a God on the inside, there was no problem.

With the intent of a light stroll, I checked out here and there, and when I was satisfied and returned, mother hugged me while crying loudly.

The face of a worn out woman that was anxious about her 1 year old child disappearing was reflected in my eyes.

This one day that I used to walk around and fill my curiosity, was a despairing day for that person.

At that moment, I finally noticed. The current me is Kuromiya Haine before it is the Dark God Entropy.

That I am the son of these people.

Before thinking, my body had already moved.

"?!! Hey wait, Haine!"

The stop of father didn't make it in time, and, running out from the shade of the tree, I rushed straight towards my objective.

“Eh? Guwaaaaa?!!!”

The knight gets punched and rolls over.

“Mother!” (Haine)

“Haine... Don’t! Run away!”

However, I stood in front of mother, faced the confused knights, and said,

“If you are coming at me, come prepared! If you are going to hurt this person, I will be knocking the lights out of every single one of you!!” (Haine)

Chapter 03: The Light Knights

“Gubah?!” “Ogeh?!” “Uboo?!”

The armored knights fly through the air one after the other.

There’s no point in adding hits to opponents that are wearing something like armor, so if you simply use their own momentum to throw them, they will fall to the ground with the weight of the armor added, which will make them face hell.

Depending on the way they fall, they might even snap their neck and die instantly, but I have added some discretion in order to avoid that from happening.

“Father! I leave mother in your care!” (Haine)

“Understood! But you...”

I leave mother to father, and just like that, I rush forward.

Normally, this is a situation where we should be hiding and checking the situation, but since we have already left our hiding, we have no choice but to confront them.

Even with just a slight glance, I can tell that there’s around 50 knights. If I fight them all at once, I will just be crushed by their numbers.

In that case, what’s most important is to crush their leader.

The important-looking armored knight that seems to be one peck higher than the other knights and was giving orders a few moments ago.

Aiming for that guy, I ran straight at him.

“Captain! Be careful!”

“?!!! What?! What’s going on?!”

The other side seems to have begun noticing the abnormality, and the one who was acting all high-and-mighty suddenly got flustered.

“What are you idiots doing?! Crush this insolent one that’s coming here! In

the name of the Light Goddess!!”

Abiding to the order, a number of knights tried to obstruct me, but I avoid them, and at times I punch them back, favourably closing the distance to the knight that was called as the captain.

“Uwaaa!!! Don’t come any closer!!”

The captain was visibly flustered. He hurriedly threw away the sword in his hand, and in place of that, unsheathed a dagger that was at his waist.

(?! What is he intending to do?)

If you are going to clash with the enemy, you would normally have more of an advantage with the long sword.

And yet, he threw that away and changed to a dagger that’s clearly lacking in effectivity as a weapon.

This mysterious action of his was soon made clear.

At the same time as he points the dagger at me, the blade shines brightly.

“[Holy Light Bullet]!!”

“What?!” (Haine)

A light arrow was shot from the dagger. Is that how I should describe it?

At any rate, it was a light that flew fast like an arrow. If this hits, it would be bad.

“Guh!”

My swung arm comes into contact with the light arrow, and I deflect it.

As expected, I had to stop running and temporarily stay in place.

“Wa?!! You deflected the [Holy Light Bullet]? That’s impossible...”

The captain, who shot the light arrow, had his eyes wide open in shock.

“The power of the Light Goddess that was granted to us, the Aurora Knight corps...this [Holy Light Bullet] that had holy power packed in it was...repelled by a countryside bum like him. There’s no way that’s possible!”

“Why is a human utilizing the power of light? I don’t understand, but...”

(Haine)

I was so surprised, I ended up utilizing a bit of my power of darkness.

“Don’t just go talking down about the countryside when you just come invading our village!!” (Haine)

The charge resumes.

I close the distance to the knight captain that was completely bent back now.

“Hiiih!! Don’t get closer!! [Holy Light Bullet]! [Holy Light Bullet]! [Holy Light Bullet]! [Holy Light Bullet]! [Holy Light Bullet]! [Holy Light Bullet]!”

Falling into panic, he shot light arrows like crazy, but that’s exactly why they didn’t hit.

There was already no need to deflect them, I simply had to dodge them, and was easily able to enter into fighting range.

“This is the end.” (Haine)

And then, as I was about to punch the fully shaken face of this man—

Something stopped my fist.

It wasn’t the leader that was simply panicked all around.

“H-Hero-dono?!”

Is what the captain said.

The one that suddenly appeared and entered in between me and the captain was a person wearing an equally white shining armor, however, its presence was completely different.

It gave out majesty.

A beautiful girl.

Chapter 04: Hero's Arrival

"Hero-dono?! Hero-dono!"

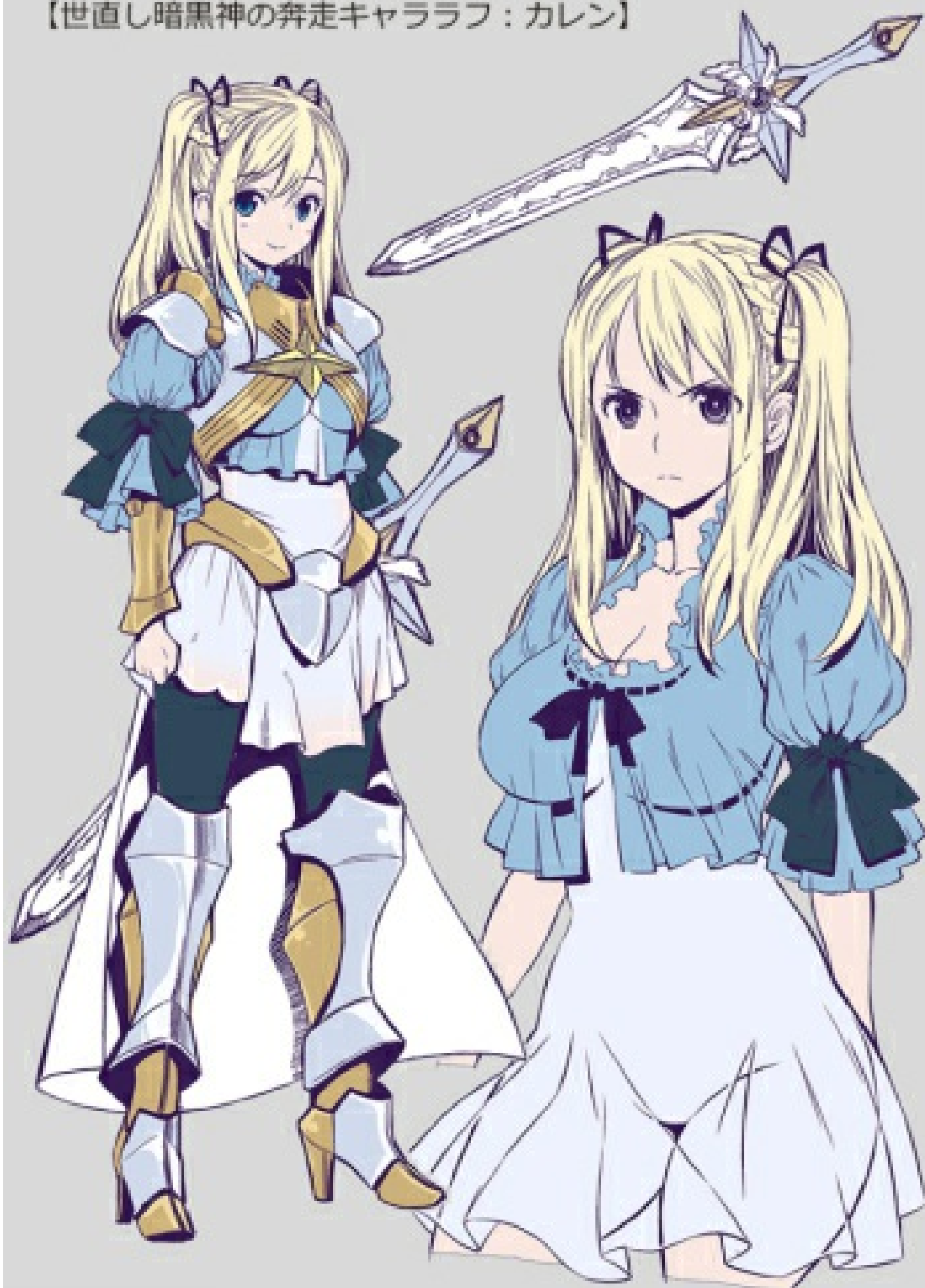
The captain that was weak on his knees and agitated, stood back up suddenly.

"This villager was opposing us! He went against the Light Church! Please give him swift divine punishment!"

The fist that was supposed to be dug on his face, was stopped by the shield of the girl that had suddenly appeared.

From the impression the armor she wears is giving, I can tell that she is in the same organization as these knights that are invading our village.

【世直し暗黒神の奔走キャララフ：カレン】



“Captain Vesage...”

The girl turns back to the captain.

“Why did you depart on your own volition? I told you that I was going to check the state of the seventh recruitment corp, and that you were to stay in standby until I returned.”

“That’s...uhm, that’s...!”

It looks like they are quarreling.

“Also, what’s with this atmosphere? It is as if you are capturing the place. Captain Vesage, what in the world are you trying to do here?”

“That’s, uhm...we, the Aurora knight corp, for the sake of gathering new members...” (Vesage)

The Captain-san speaks with a fading voice like that of a child being scolded after a prank.

It seems the girl got tired of listening to what he had to say, this time, she turns to my direction.

“You are someone from this village, right?”

“Eh? Y-Yeah...” (Haine)

Since she was being well-mannered, I reflexively respond in the same way.

The knights around, and the villagers that were gathered outside by those knights, had their attention on that girl and were not moving.

“I am truly sorry.”

Is what she said as she lowered her head deeply.

Looks like she is apologizing, or more like, there’s no doubt she is.

“I apologize from the bottom of my heart for the trouble that our people of the Church have caused to your village. I strictly ordered them not to disturb the livelihood of the villagers, but it ended up in this. It is all because of my own negligence.”

“Eh, uhm...”

“I will have the knights put away their weapons immediately. On my name, I

assure the safety and freedom of the villagers. On top of that, can you please hear what I have to say?"

In that space of time, she lowers her head even deeper to the point that I could only see the back of her head.

'What beautiful hair', is what I thought, but this is not the time to be thinking about that.

Looking at my surroundings, it seems the knights sheathed their swords with the words of the girl, placed aside their spears, and lower their heads in apology.

Should I consider this as the danger being gone for the time being? But it looks like they don't have any intentions of leaving.

It was as if they were saying they won't be moving an inch until we hear out what they have to say.

"Haine." "Haine?!"

Mother was accompanied by father and were coming to where we are.

I let out one heavy sigh.

In the end, I decided to listen.

"We came from a place a lot further away from here, the Light capital. We are the Light Church."

"Light Church?" (Haine)

"Yes. One of the five Gods of creation, the church that follows the Light Goddess Inflation-sama."

The five Gods of creation.

It refers to the five Gods that created this world.

The Light Goddess Inflation, the Fire God, Wind God, Water God, Mother Earth God.

For me who was a Dark God, they are the hateful people that sealed me. However, it seems they are targets of religious faith for the people here.

Well, it is obvious huh. They are Gods after all.

“And I am the light hero that represents the Light Church, Kourin Karen.”
(Karen)

The word hero is not a word I am familiar with.

Even in my memories as a Dark God, I don't know about such a title.

“And so, what is this Light Church and the hero-sama doing in such a remote place like this?” (Haine)

From how the talk has gone, it seems I have no choice but to be the representative of this village, so I ask that of the hero Karen-san.

“We are currently looking for new knights.” (Karen)

“Knights?” (Haine)

“Yes, one of the organizations of the Light Church, the Aurora Knight corps. We are being troubled by a lack of personnel. In order to protect the innocent people that follow the Light Goddess, the number of knights is still not enough.”
(Karen)

Hearing that, the words the high-and-mighty Captain said about gathering all villagers, especially the young ones between 10 to 20 years old made sense.

“But it is a honest-to-word recruitment! In order to accept people that want to become members of the knight corps, we moved around the towns and villages in the area.” (Karen)

“But the knights that came here are clearly different, right? Not only did they try to recruit, it felt like they were going to kidnap the young ones of this village. The one who was leading this was...” (Haine)

The gaze of me and Karen-san were directed at the same place.

If I remember correctly, his name is Vesage.

“I-I had no choice!” (Vesage)

At this late of the game, captain Vesage spat out excuses.

“Since I have the chance, I will say it. Hero-dono is way too easygoing! There's no need to do something as lukewarm as recruiting, we should gather all the

people here that can fight, and strengthen the Aurora knight corps as much as possible!” (Vesage)

“In order to do that, you tried to levy the youngsters of this village?” (Haine)

“That’s right. Not ‘recruiting’ but ‘levying’!” (Vesage)

Captain Vesage bites back at the retort I made.

“Haine-san.” (Karen)

Karen-san also enters the talk.

“I also admit that the methods of captain Vesage were forceful, however, the grace of the five Gods has begun thinning in this world. The monsters are running rampant, and in order to fight against it, we have to gather people.”
(Karen)

Even Karen-san.

“Of course, we are not forcing anyone. However, I want to fight together with everyone in order to protect this world, and in order to do that, I have to ask of you...please!” (Karen)

Karen-san once again lowers her head to the point I see her back of the head.

This time it wasn’t an apology but a request.

And it wasn’t only for me, but to all the villagers. But the only thing that was returned was agitation.

Can’t be helped.

The sincerity of Karen-san was clear as day, but the villagers also have their own life. 10 to 20 years old, in other words, they would be taking our strongest workforce, which is totally troublesome for the village.

There will probably be no one wanting to join, but Karen-san’s side is giving airs that they won’t be budging an inch unless someone raises their hand.

If handled poorly, the knights might once again burst and resume hunting people.

“.....Understood.” (Haine)

Heaving a sigh, I step forward.

A voice called out 'Haine!'. It was the voice of mother, and that voice pierced my chest for an instant.

"I will go. That's why, please be satisfied with only me. Don't try to persuade the other villagers, and of course, don't harm them. Those are my conditions for joining." (Haine)

Chapter 05: I obtained a homeland

This is how it was decided that I, Kuromiya Haine, will be joining the Light Church.

I received the praise from the surroundings in the sense that I sacrificed myself for the village, but it is not like I myself didn't have other reasons.

That's...to see the world.

In the battle with the Gods that occurred 1,600 years ago, I -the Dark God-was sealed by the victors, the other five Gods, and they should have recreated the world in the way they wanted.

And in truth, it seems the Light Goddess, Inflation, has created a church that follows her, and there's a high chance the others are doing the same thing.

In the time I was absent, just how much did they intervene with the humans?

In order to investigate that, I will be going. If there's something that surpasses the boundaries of acceptable, it is my role as a God myself to correct it.

In truth, this is something I should have done sooner. This was one of the reasons why I reincarnated as a human after all.

And yet, there was a reason why I let it drag until I turned 18 years.

The reason for that was...

*

"Haine, are you really...really going?"

The moment of my departure, mother grabbed my hand with reluctance and was not showing any signs of releasing it.

I...was also unable to shake away that hand of hers and stayed just like that.

"It is fine already, let Haine go."

"But dear, Haine has not left this village even once, you know? Even when he goes hunting, he would come back in less than 3 days without fail, and yet, if he were to go to the city, who knows when he will come back..."

I was also worried about not being able to attend to mother who has a weak constitution.

Actually, there's times when mother worried about me and ended up worsening her physical condition because of it. If possible, I don't want to leave either.

I was prepared for it, but this is a more painful farewell than expected.

And then, the linked hand of mother and I was gently separated by father.

"Haine is a man. The time will come when he has to leave to the outside world in order to ascertain his own worth. And today is the day. If you are his mother, congratulate Haine for the start of his new life..... Haine."

"Yes, father." (Haine)

"You probably don't remember, but when you were 1 year old, there was a time when you disappeared from the house. Your mom and I were searching desperately for you, but we were unable to find you even when it reached the night, and we thought it was already too late."

"..."

"However, the moment night came, you came back all of a sudden. You came back to the house on your own. It was as if you had finished your stroll and was coming back from it. Since then, mom became an incredible worrywart, but I, on the contrary, was impressed. 'Being able to do such a big adventure when you are only 1 year old, just how big of an adventure will you be able to achieve when you are an adult?' Is what I thought."

Father places both hands on my shoulders.

"If it's about me and mom, don't worry. You are not the kind of man who should live your whole life in a small village. Go see the world. Think of this event as a good chance to do that."

Saying this, father hugged me with both arms.

For the soul of the Dark God, this was only a body that was coincidentally chosen in order to descend to the surface world, however, for the current me, these people are without doubt...my parents.

These 18 years until now, I have been poured with love, taught a lot of things, and was raised by them.

There's no way I would think this connection with them was just a fictitious one.

“Mother, father...I love you.” (Haine)

I hug mother and father, and for the first time in my life, I depart to the world where these people are not there.

At that moment, I once again learned...I was a result from inheriting the soul of the God of Darkness, but before that, I am a human...I am Kuromiya Haine.

Chapter 06: Crucible of humans

And in this way, my stage has changed from my homeland to the light capital, Apollon City.

This city where the light church's main headquarters are in, is a prominent big city even in the standards of this world.

The number of people and buildings, it is on a whole different level from my homeland. It overwhelmed a countryside person like me.

"Ufufu, are you surprised?" (Karen)

Karen-san who is accompanying me, was looking pleasantly at me who had turned into a country bumpkin.

"Is this your first time in Apollon City?" (Karen)

"No, rather than calling it my first experience in a city, it would be more like, this is my first time going out of the village. Everything I see is surprising."
(Haine)

"Is that so? In my case, it was surprising to see a completely different side of Haine-san. Since I met you, I always thought you were a cool person after all."
(Karen)

"Ah, Karen-san, what's that?" (Haine)

"You are not listening at all..." (Karen)

What caught my interest were the vehicles that were running around the city.

No, vehicles are normally things that are pulled by cows or horses, but these vehicles have nothing pulling them. The vehicle is moving by itself.

Moreover, in this paved road, there's not only one of those kind of vehicles, there's several of them, and they were going back and forth.

In other words, that vehicle that moves on its own isn't something special, but a common thing.

"That's an ethereal car." (Karen)

“Ethereal car?” (Haine)

“A vehicle that moves with ethereal.” (Karen)

“Hah?” (Haine)

It seems she is trying to explain it, but it didn’t serve as an explanation.

“Hmph...it is a vehicle that has degraded humans.”

The one who said this in a bad mood was, as expected, captain Vesage who was together with us. The knight corp that he leads as well, and there’s also the other corps that had spread to other locations in order to recruit new members and had reunited as we were getting closer to the light capital. It had become quite the orderly mass.

Within that group, there were a number of people that had accepted the recruitment like me.

And so, the talk of captain Vesage continues.

“Because something like that exists, people have forgotten the grace of the Light Goddess and have become arrogant. Hey, newcomer, I will be telling you this in advance since you are a country bumpkin. The light church completely forbids the use of such machines. Remember that.” (Vesage)

It is true that the knights of the light church, even when there’s this many adults, are all walking on foot or riding a horse.

There’s this many, so it would have been easier to just prepare a big one of those things called ethereal cars and bring them along that way.

“Captain Vesage, please don’t vent it on Haine-san. Seriously, you have been grumpy since the time in the village.” (Karen)

“But Hero-dono, our corp was assigned a quota of 50 people. And yet, we only brought back one. What would the founder-sama and the knight’s commander say?!” (Vesage)

“If they complain, I don’t mind you telling them it was all my fault. Also, I think this one recruit was our highest result in this time’s recruitment expedition.” (Karen)

“Hm?” “Eh?”

Vesage and I react at the same time.

“This one recruit...are you referring to this country bumpkin?” (Vesage)

“Yes. Haine-san didn’t hesitate against the [Holy Light Bullet] shot by captain Vesage and was able to deal with it perfectly. Even when it was his first time seeing it.” (Karen)

“Ugh...”

“Fast and precise decision making. On top of that, those quick-witted movements, there’s no shortcomings in having him as a fighting force as he is now. Isn’t this the kind of talent we were looking for?” (Karen)

“Gugugugu!!”

What Karen-san was saying must have been sound, but captain Vesage, who was defeated by me, was unable to obediently consent to it and was grinding his teeth.

And so, in order to not worsen the situation, I decide to stay silent.

“B-But...it all depends on whether this country bumpkin can show results in the entrance exam of the knight corps.” (Vesage)

“In that point, there’s no problem. I believe in him.” (Karen)

What are they talking about?

I couldn’t help but feel uneasiness towards the talk of those two.

While we were in the middle of that, we arrived at the last point of our journey.

The Light Grand Church located at the center of Apollon City.

This is where the main headquarters of the light church that follow the Light Goddess, Inflation, is located.

Chapter 07: Entrance Exam

“The ones aiming to enroll, gather over here!”

When we crossed the gates of the Grand Church, the people that were not wearing armor were gathered quickly.

It is the people that were gathered from the recruitment expedition.

I am also one of them, but calling me as someone ‘aiming to enroll’ doesn’t click in me.

Karen-san and captain Vesage have long gone somewhere else.

As a hero and a captain, they have their own duties to perform.

“Listen well maggots! I commend you for gathering at the side of the light! From today on, you are one of the prided members of the light church!!”

The one talking to the newcomers is a somewhat asphyxiating bald old man.

It seems something has already started.

“However, even if I say ‘light church’ in general, the roles are many. Priests that offer prayers to the Light Goddess, the people that look after those priests; and then, there’s the military power of the church, the Aurora Knight Corps associated with it, the Light knights! That’s the majority of it but...ah right right!”

The bald old man had a face as if saying ‘I will be saying something interesting now’ as he puts on airs in his tone.

“Within this group, if there’s someone that’s aiming to become the Light Hero, this is for your own good, just give up in advance. A person that surpasses Karen-sama who is the one currently in active duty, it would take at least 30 years before someone like that appears!!”

When he finished, incredible cheers came from the crowd.

“Now that the preliminary talk has been wrapped up...maggots, I will have you take an exam. Don’t worry, we won’t be making you do anything difficult. We are only using this.”

Saying this, the old man lifts something in his hand.

It was hard to make out because my position was far away, but it seems to be some sort of board.

“This is called an element board, and it is a tool to identify your element. Everything in this world has received the divine blessing of the five Gods that created this world. Earth, fire, water, wind, and light; these five elements.”

Looking carefully at the board that the old man was carrying, I could see that it is shaped in a clean pentagon, and at each side, there’s the symbol of the earth, fire, water, wind, and light Gods.

“When a person holds this element board, this needle at the center will identify your element. We, the Light Church, will of course welcome the light element. The people that have the needle of the element board pointing at the light element will unconditionally enter the Aurora Knight Corps!!”

After this explanation, the actual exam began.

The aspirators were lined up and were holding the element board in turns.

“Wind element! Rejected!” Water element! Rejected!” “Light element! Pass!”

That voice resounded inside the Grand Church.

While we were at it, my turn came. The face of that bald old man soon got right in front of me.

“You...you are Kuromiya Haine, right?”

“Eh? That’s right but, why do you know my name?” (Haine)

“Well fine. At any rate, try holding it.”

“Hm?”

Is what the old man said as he holds out the pentagonal board to me. At that moment, the needle of the element board pointed towards a place that was slightly to the left of the light symbol.

That’s probably the element of this old man.

“Right right, I am the vice captain of the Aurora Knight Corps, Grades. If you are going to join the knight corps, I will become a direct superior of you. I forgot

to tell you.” (Grades)

“Say something like that to everyone please. What’s with this open bias.”
(Haine)

“The hero Karen-sama told me to take good care of you. I have also heard about your rebellion towards Vesage. If you can become an instant fighting force, I also welcome you with big open arms, that’s all.” (Grades)

I see, so that’s how it is.

At any rate, I take the element board from the vice captain Grades.

Now then, I wonder what it will show...

“.....Hm?!”

Creaking sounds came from the element board.

The needle of the element board, I don’t know what it is made of, but it is probably metallic.

The creaking sound continued. And then, right after, the needle bended without anyone touching it.

“Whaaat?!!” (Grades)

Vice Captain Grades who was looking at it right in front of me was also surprised.

Without pointing at any of the elements, the needle of the element board broke itself and pointed to the sky.

As the God of Darkness, my element is of course, darkness.

For this element board that has no entry for darkness, there was no way for it to accurately identify my element.

Chapter 08: Grunt of Light

“Listen well! You guys are the leftovers!! Trash that didn’t make the cut!! That’s why you were brought here! Understood?!”

“”””Yes ma’am!!””””

“From now on, I will be making you useless trash into the strongest and all-purpose trash!! By the time I say it is already okay, you guys should have become trash that won’t lose to anyone! Can you keep up?!”

“”””Yes ma’am!””””

“Then, question! Where’s this?!”

“”””The kitchen of the light church! Ma’am!!””””

“That’s right! And I am the one in charge of the light church’s kitchen, the head chef, Angan Regine!! For you guys who have been sent here to do subordinate work, I am the captain, I am the God!! Understood?!” (Regine)

“”””Yes ma’am!!””””

“This is the place that governs all the meals of the light church! The priests, knights, the founder-sama! The food we make heads to those people in their holy line of work!! If you see it lightly as some miscellaneous work, we will drown you in the sea of Bejimait! Breakfast is a battle! Lunch is a battle too! And dinner is a war!! There are times when we have to prepare emergency food for the Knight Corps when they depart after all!! If you guys exert yourself here, you will become splendid cooks of Light!!”

“”””Yes! Ma’...am!!!””””

“Y—Yes...ma’am!”

Yes, Kuromiya Haine here.

Given the element board to hold, the needle, that was supposed to point one of the five elements, broke because of the Dark God soul I had inside this body, and I was splendidly rejected.

And so, the place I was sent to is the kitchen of the light church’s main

headquarters, and it seems I will now be made to work as an apprentice to become a Light cook.

It wasn't only me. The people that didn't have the needle of the element board pointing at the light element were forcefully send to the church's numerous miscellaneous duties.

We were being placed to work right away like work-horses.

*

"...This is not how it was supposed to be."

Is what the guy at my side said.

By the way, he was ordered together with me to peel potatoes and we were currently moving our knives at the back of the kitchen.

"In my plans, the me that was supposed to have passed the exam with flying colors would enter the Aurora Knight Corps, immediately stand out, show achievements one after the other, get popular with the girls, and have a flowery lifestyle. And yet, what's this about peeling potatoes? This doesn't turn into a career at all."

"Don't say that in the presence of Regine-san. You are gonna get a shoulder throw from that." (Haine)

His name is Frost.

He is a newcomer like me that accepted the recruitment of the light church, but the needle pointed at an element other than light and was rejected from entering the knight corps.

And so, he was send to the kitchen as a miscellaneous worker, but it seems he is sent to do a majority of things I am also send to do, and now, we have completely become friends with each other.

"There's no need to be so pessimistic about it. Even this potato peeling, if you get serious about it, it can be unexpectedly fun, you know? Just how well can you peel it as perfectly as possible..." (Haine)

"What I want to peel is not the skin of a potato, but the clothes of girls!" (Frost)

“As long as you continue saying things like that, I think that even if you become a knight, you won’t be popular.” (Haine)

If we exclude the part about his perverted way of speaking, he is a good guy, and we were soon able to become good friends.

‘So the humans have evolved in a variety of manners’, is what I have realized. In that sense, the wild actions of that Regine-san person were also likeable. Let’s write what happened today in a letter and send it to mother and father.

“Anyways, Haine, why are you here?” (Frost)

“What’s with that sudden and weird question? Was that a philosophical question?” (Haine)

“No, it is not the type of question asking where we have come from and where we are headed to. What I mean is...you are pretty famous within the newcomers. In the time when they were recruiting newcomers, there’s talk that you got into a fight with the captain and send him flying. Even I have heard about it.” (Frost)

“...I didn’t send him flying. I was stopped right before I sent him flying after all.” (Haine)

“Geh, then the part about you fighting him was true?! Moreover, from how you said it, you were 90% in the winning side?! ...Well, there’s the matter about the entrance exam. Even if the element is different, you could have gotten send to a better place than this. Or more like, isn’t it fine to have you enter the knight corps?” (Frost)

So that’s what he meant by that ‘why are you here?’.

“I am plenty satisfied here though. Cooking is fun.” (Haine)

“You are a man lacking in ambition! If you are a man, even if you are to fall in a place like this, at least have a goal like having a date with sis Regine!!” (Frost)

“Eh? Frost, you are aiming for her? For that Regine-san?” (Haine)

“...How...old is sis Regine?” (Frost)

“Based on the information I have, 32 years old.” (Haine)

“32 huh. Barely in my strike zone.” (Frost)

Is he seriously going to aim for it?

I was beginning to feel fear towards my new friend, but well, it has nothing to do with me, so I concentrate in peeling potatoes.

“Hoh~, there’s a guy with interesting taste here.”

“Uo.” “Hiaaaa?!”

A shiny bald head suddenly appeared.

It is the vice captain that was in charge of the entrance exam, Grades.

“Just a warning, pair of newcomers. You better give up on that amazon. There was a formal light knight who stroke the ass of Regine as a joke while she was working as a waitress, but...” (Grades)

“W-What happened?!” (Frost)

“He got an axe kick on his head and is groaning on his hospital bed even to this current day.” (Grandes)

Wouldn’t it be a good idea to have that woman enter the light knights?

Well, let’s leave that aside for now...

“Did you have some sort of business here, vice captain? To suddenly appear at the back of the kitchen like this, could it be that the knight corps have nothing to do?” (Haine)

“That’s a cold way of putting it. Well, it is that, there’s also other girls in the light church that you shouldn’t anger. Last time, I messed up with that person, so I have come to make a recovery.” (Grades)

“?”

“Haine, I have brought something nice for you..... There’s no one here aside from you guys, right?” (Grades)

“Well, it is the back of the kitchen. If it is inside the kitchen, there’s a lot of people though. Should I call them?” (Haine)

“Stop it! I only have business with you!” (Grades)

The bald vice captain looks warily around before putting his hand inside a hemp sack.

“Oh, what is it? Is it something erotic?” (Frost)

Frost judges the wariness of the vice captain in this way, and gets excited.

“Shut up. It can’t be helped, so I will show it to you too. Don’t tell anyone about me walking around with this, okay?” (Grades)

What came out from the hemp sack was a rectangular box-looking thing that was slightly big to carry around.

“...What’s this? It doesn’t look like something erotic at all.” (Frost)

“That’s just your own assumption. You see, this is an element measuring device.” (Grades)

Element measuring device?

Chapter 09: A glimpse of culture

According to the explanation of vice captain Grades, it seems this element measuring device is used to estimate the element amount of a person.

‘Isn’t that the same as the element board used at the entrance exam?’, is the retort I gave out, and the vice captain makes a supplementary explanation as if biting the words.

“This is something superior to the element board. With ethereal energy, it measures elements with a lot more detail and accuracy.” (Grades)

“Ethereal energy?! Isn’t that a machine then?!” (Frost)

When Frost lifted his voice, vice-captain Grades glares at him.

“That’s why I said not to tell anyone! Okay? Don’t tell anyone! Especially people like the captain!!” (Grades)

Frost was startled by the anger of the vice-captain and slowly withers down.

There’s parts that I can’t get the outline of from the conversation between the two, but for now, let’s leave that aside and...

“In other words, we can have a better measurement of our element compared to the element board?” (Haine)

“That’s right. Showing is worth more than a thousand words. Hey, you are the one that came from the Reustor village, Frost, right?” (Grades)

“Eh? Yes!” (Frost)

It is unexpected to see someone high-up like a vice-captain knowing the name of Frost.

“I was the one in charge of the entrance exam. I have properly gone through the list of newcomers. I will be using the element measuring device on you, Frost.” (Grades)

At the surface of the element measuring device there were five frames, and at the same time this was directed at Frost, shining words appear inside the frames. Rather than calling it words, they were actually numbers.

[Earth: 105] [Water: 130] [Light: 128] [Fire: 214] [Wind: 309]

“Ooh?!”

“Frost is more specialized in wind than fire huh. 309 is quite the high number, you know. If you had gone to the Wind Church of Ludora, you would have been placed in the Whirlwind Raid Corps, no doubt.” (Grades)

“Seriously?! I will go now!!” (Frost)

“Can’t. You have already joined the Light Church, so we won’t be letting you escape.” (Grades)

“Eeeeh?!” (Frost)

If it were the element board, it would only point the strongest element, but the element measuring device will show you in numbers how much of an affinity you have with each element huh.

It is true that the amount of information obtained is completely different.

“...Uhm, vice-captain Grades, is it okay to ask a question?” (Haine)

“What?” (Grades)

“Frost’s strongest element is the wind element, but I think the second one, the fire element, also has quite the high number.” (Haine)

“Right. With a 214, if it were light element, it is a numbers that’s plenty enough to enter the knight corps.” (Grades)

“No waaay!” (Frost)

Ignoring Frost who was beaten up by reality, I continue the talk.

“Doesn’t that mean the people that didn’t have the light element pointed in the entrance exam, could have had their second strongest element as light, moreover, there’s the possibility they had a good enough number to get a pass?” (Haine)

Vice-captain Grades answered this question with a heavy tone that he hasn’t used until now.

“...It’s exactly as you say. The element board is, in the end, something that simply points the highest elemental affinity one has. To put it in another way,

even if the light element is only a 100, if the other numbers are all lower than 99, you would get a pass. On the contrary, even if you have a light element number of 300, if there's at least one other element that has a number of 301, you will end up rejected." (Grades)

"What's with that? Isn't that weird?" (Frost)

"It is just as Frost says. But that's the current state of the Light Church...no, the current state of the whole world." (Grades)

The current state of the whole world.

I felt an unpleasant ring from those words, but I had no choice but to leave it aside for now as well.

"More importantly! The main issue is you, Kuromiya Haine! I will be using this element measuring device on you!" (Grades)

"I see! The element board had its needle broken, but if it's this device, there might be a result appearing, right?!" (Frost)

"Exaaaactly! Am I not a genius?!" (Grades)

"You are a genius! Oh~ brave, hero! Please let me enter the knight corps!" (Frost)

"Hahahaha! Caaaan't!!" (Grades)

What's this, these two guys are hitting it off pretty smoothly. Is there sympathy or something there?

"No, but I—!!" (Frost)

"Gotta test it out! Now then, using this element measuring device..." (Grades)

And so, the numbers that were shown...

[Earth: 000] [Water: 000] [Light: 000] [Fire: 000] [Wind: 000]

"Okay, retreeeeat! Retreaaat!" (Frost)

"I was stupid for expecting anything! Thinking Haine-kun was a capable child was only an illusion of mine!" (Grades)

Even if you tell me that...

I will be repeating myself here but, I am the reincarnation of the Dark God. My element is absolutely 'darkness'.

This element measuring device most likely doesn't have enough functions to perfectly measure a person's element.

If this measuring device had a sixth entry, it would probably have the numbers 999 there.

"Hm? But having element numbers all 0 should be impossible. No matter how low it is, you would normally have 100, you know?" (Grades)

"Seriously?! Haine, are you okay? Did you eat something bad?!" (Frost)

There's no way food would be a deciding factor for elements.

Humans are beings that were created with the divine powers of six Gods. That's why six elements exist.

In truth, it would be ideal to have a good balance of 6 elements mixed in, and leaning too much onto one would be bad.

"...Could it be...the element measuring device broke because of Haine just like the time with the element board? Isn't this bad? Hey, this was a rented one, you know?!" (Grades)

"Now that you mention it, vice-captain Grades, the lowest number is around 100, but what would be the highest in terms of element number?" (Haine)

I kind of got interested in it and tried asking.

Chapter 10: The hero heads out

“Hm? The upper limit for the element number huh. Generally speaking, around 400.” (Grades)

“No way! Then my 309 in the wind element is high isn’t it?! Damn it!!! If only I had gone to the Wind Church!!” (Frost)

“But you see, there’s always exceptions. For example, the light hero, Karen-sama.” (Grades)

Karen.

The girl that was the very person who invited me to the Light Church.

I have not seen her since the time we separated at the entrance exam but, I wonder what she is doing.

“Listen and be amazed. The element number of Karen-sama is apparently around 700.” (Grades)

“S-Seven hundred?!”

A 400 is supposed to be the upper limit, and yet, she has 700?!

Impossible. If a person had that much inclination in an element, this would be in a level that would affect their very life. It would be another case if there’s the soul of a God inside just like me though.

“Even within the church, they can measure a detailed number for their elements, after doing a complicated ritual that takes around 1 week, that is. Karen-sama was chosen to be the light hero based on that strong element number. And so, our job as the knight corps is to support the hero-sama!!” (Grades)

I see. In other words, heroes are the strongest ones in the knight corps.

With an elemental affinity of 700 in the light element, power follows.

A group that fights with the hero as the centre. That’s the knight corps.

But being a combat organization means that there’s obviously something you

are fighting against, right?

While I was thinking: ‘What are they fighting against?’...

“So you were in a place like this!!”

“Hm? Eeeeh?!”

By the time I noticed, there was a beautiful girl in white armour standing there.

“Hero-sama?!” “Hero Karen-sama?!”

Grades and Frost were extremely flustered.

“Vice captain Grades was also here? I said this before, didn’t I? Haine-san can add to our fighting force immediately, so let him enter no matter the element. And yet, why is he doing mere miscellaneous work in the kitchen?!” (Karen)

“No, well...this is work as well, you know. It is not like I can do anything I want, you know!!” (Grades)

“Please don’t call it ‘mere miscellaneous work in the kitchen’! If Regine-san heard that, we would be seeing blood!” (Frost)

The two got incredibly scared.

“Karen-san? Why are you in a place like this?” (Haine)

“It is obviously to look for you! This is an emergency! This may be sudden but, there’s the need of Haine-san’s assistance!” (Karen)

Karen-san takes my hand and forcefully pulls it.

“Vice captain Grades as well, return to your station as soon as possible and command the knights! Haine-san and I will be heading out first! Please tell that to the captain while you are at it!!” (Karen)

“Wa?!” (Haine)

While I was confused on what was going on, I got pulled by Karen-san and change the location.

At the place we arrive at, there was something there I didn’t know what it was.

“...Uhm, what’s this?” (Haine)

“A small flying motorcycle machine powered by ethereal energy.” (Karen)

“?”

“Because it is a flaptor type, only one person can ride it, but in exchange, it has speed. Also, this little one is especially modified for my use, so it is the number one model for speed. 37 times faster. Well, that’s only the written specs though.” (Karen)

“???????”

I didn’t understand what she was saying at all.

What’s in front of me is probably the same type as those ethereal cars that are running all around the city and the element measuring device that the vice captain Grades had.

How to say it, it is as if it was made with a cradle as its design, looks like it would be incredibly fast. And from both sides, there were wings coming out from it, and it looked like it was possible to fly. And it seems it is big enough to have people ride on it. <Definitely a Laputa reference>

“It is not made to have two people ride it, but since circumstances are circumstances; Haine-san, please hold tightly to my back.” (Karen)

While saying this, Karen-san straddles onto the so called small flying machine, as if riding a horse.

“Now! Haine-san too!” (Karen)

“Y-Yes!!”

Following the same movements as Karen-san, I straddle onto the back of the flying machine, and wrap my arms around her body.

She told me to do it. And she had an atmosphere saying she won’t be taking a no for an answer.

“Place more strength into it! You will get thrown off like this, you know!” (Karen)

“Eh? Like this?” (Haine)

“...I didn’t tell you to grab my boobs.” (Karen)

“Sorry!” (Haine)

I kind of know what’s going to happen now.

“Takeoff! We are going at full speed!!” (Karen)

“Oooooohhh?!!!” (Haine)

The flying machine we were riding really flew.

Moreover, at an incredible speed. The air was hitting me with terrifying density, and it is certainly true that I was about to be thrown off by it.

“K-Karen-san! Karen-saaaan!!” (Haine)

“What is it?! If you talk, you are going to bite your tongue!” (Karen)

“Uhm, I don’t understand the situation at all though?! Or more like, where are we heading to, even going through the trouble of flying in the sky?!” (Haine)

The Grand Church is already at the far distance.

Karen-san who was driving the flying machine said this without turning to my direction,

“As I said, it is an emergency! They have appeared!” (Karen)

“They?” (Haine)

“The enemy of the Aurora Knight corps and the threat of us humans; monsters!” (Karen)

Chapter 11: Monster Invasion

“Guoooo?!”

It was only for a few minutes, but the terrifying speed of the flying machine was taking away my willpower and stamina.

“To think such a fearsome thing existed! The city is seriously scaryyy!!”
(Haine)

I roll down from the flying machine that had already landed and enjoy the nostalgic feeling of the ground.

“Haine-san, please get a grip of yourself. We are already at the location, or more like, at enemy territory. It wouldn’t be strange for anything to happen.”
(Karen)

Even though Karen-san was on the same ride, she didn’t show a single sign of being exhausted.

“The fastest the light knight corps’ main force can arrive is at best after 5 hours. In that time, we will scout out the place and investigate the monsters’ movements.” (Karen)

“...Uhm, Karen-san, wait for a bit!” (Haine)

“I want to avoid battle, but please be prepared for when it turns out as unavoidable. But at that moment, I will be taking the front, so I won’t let Haine-san face any life endangering situation.” (Karen)

“Karen-san!! Karen-san!!” (Haine)

“?!! Yes?” (Karen)

Because I suddenly raised my voice, Karen-san seems to have gotten surprised.

But if I didn’t do that, she wouldn’t listen to what I have to say, so it can’t be helped.

“...I still don’t know anything though.” (Haine)

“Eh?” (Karen)

“Things like: why I was brought here, where is this place, what is happening here, what should I be doing; Karen-san, you still haven’t explained a single thing.” (Haine)

“Eh?! ...Ah, right!” (Karen)

So she finally noticed, Karen-san went: ‘Sorry, sorry!’ while prostrating, and then, she explained the details of what has transpired till now.

“First of all, this place is one of the sections of the Trixia forest located at the southeast of Apollon City.” (Karen)

From what Karen-san says, it seems a report about the sighting of monsters was received from the Trixia forest.

“Monster...” (Haine)

“That’s right, monsters. Subjugating monsters is the main mission of the Light Knight Corps. And so, we came here in a big hurry.” (Karen)

“...Well, I understand that much but, why was I brought here as well?” (Haine)

“Uh...” (Karen)

“There’s a lot of knights at the knight corps, right? You could have brought someone there, and yet, why did you decide on a fresh recruit, moreover, one that failed the exam instantly?” (Haine)

It is not like I don’t like helping out here, but there’s way too many points that don’t make sense in the actions of Karen-san.

Karen-san made a bitter expression, and answers as if groaning.

“...The knight corps won’t come.” (Karen)

“Hah?” (Haine)

“Just like I said before, they will arrive here in 5 hours at best. Gathering will take 1 hour, preparing will take 1 hour, and to move all the way here, around 3 hours.” (Karen)

Uwaaa...

“But! If we were to wait that much, it will be way too late! It is true that monsters have appeared in this forest, and if we don’t take them out promptly, there’s no point in me being the light hero.” (Karen)

Once again, Karen-san lowers her head at me.

“I am plenty aware that it is strange for me to have Haine-san, who just joined the church, do something like this. But right now, please don’t ask anymore and just lend me your assistance!” (Karen)

“Karen-san...” (Haine)

“In this forest, there might still be people that came without knowing that monsters have appeared. Finding those people and having them take refuge, it would be impossible by myself!” (Karen)

The forest around us is still peaceful and there’s only the sound of wind making the leaves dance. However, there’s already danger inside this place.

“...”

I turn my heels.

“Let’s separate and begin moving. If we are going to search for people that didn’t manage to escape in time, that way is more efficient.” (Haine)

“B-But! If Haine-san were to encounter a monster while you are acting on your own!!” (Karen)

“Even if I look like this, I am the son of a hunter. This may be my first time in this place, but if it’s a forest, it is practically like a garden. Even against a monster, I will show you I can run away from it.” (Haine)

I end the conversation and run off.

“Now then, monsters huh.” (Haine)

There’s been a time in the past that I have fought against monsters.

Not as a Dark God, but in the time I was living as Kuromiya Haine.

In the village I was born and raised in, there’s been times when some would appear mixed with the beasts around, and in those cases, the ones to deal with it are the hunters of the village, father and I, but different from beasts,

monsters vanish like mist the moment they are defeated, so there's not a single profit from it.

'It is an enemy that only brings losses', is how father categorized them in terms of problematic ones. That's what monsters are.

They were clearly different from people, beasts, and plants, that had been born by receiving the grace of the Gods.

Or more like, I don't remember making monsters in the time I was the Dark God.

Things I didn't create exist now. One more mystery has been added in this space of 1,600 years.

"Well, leaving that aside..." (Haine)

I stop my feet, and after confirming that there's plenty enough distance from Karen-san, I stabilize my breathing and concentrate.

If there's really people that were late in running away inside this forest, there's no way we would find them by searching blindly.

I am a reincarnation of the Dark God.

Even if I am in the body of a human, I can still utilize the divine power of darkness, and am able to feel the 'dark waves' a person releases.

I touched the topic a bit with the talk about elements not that long ago but, humans were created by all six Gods at the genesis of the world.

Earth, wind, water, fire, light, and darkness; it is because all those elements are mixed in that they have all elements, and depending on the person, there's also elements they are good at and elements they are not good at.

That's why, the shadow element will always be present inside the humans. It is just that the people themselves don't know.

As the reincarnation of the Dark God, I can feel that part of them.

.....I found a reaction.

"...So there really was someone who didn't manage to escape in time?!"
(Haine)

I run full speed to the location where the reaction came from.

And after not a long period of time, I find an old woman and a small girl leaning on the trunk of a tree. It is probably a grandmother and her daughter.

At any rate, I ran to the place.

“Are you okay?!” (Haine)

The old woman was rubbing her swollen leg in pain. I can tell at a glance that she sprained it.

“Ah, you, who are you? This place is dangerous. Monsters have appeared and —”

“I know. I am a person from the Light Church that has come here for that exact reason.” (Haine)

It is fine for me to say that, right?

“Ah, that’s great! I came to this forest with my grandchild to gather edible wild plants, but...to think we would be encountering something as terrifying as that! When we tried to hurriedly run away, I fell, and...!”

She is probably agitated.

After finishing emergency treatment, I shoulder her on my back.

“Grandma, grandma!”

“You come as well. We will be leaving the forest. If possible, it would be great if you were to guide the way.” (Haine)

It was at this moment... this forest, that only had the gentle rustling of leaves, had a thunderous sound reverberate in it, and while a lot of leaves were being scattered around, the figure of those guys appeared.

So it has finally come.

A monster.

Chapter 12: Fierce battle against monsters

It has appeared; a monster.

A bug-shaped monster that is around the size of a human, putting it more concretely, it is a dragonfly.

A big dragonfly the size of a human was flying in the air while staring right at the old woman, her grandchild, and I.

“...It is totally aiming at us.” (Haine)

Monsters only attack humans.

For example, even if a rabbit or a deer were to pass here, they wouldn't even stutter one bit and attack only the humans. They are accursed beings that work in that way.

“Grandma, I am scared!”

A young girl, that probably doesn't even reach 5 years old, was clinging to the old woman while trembling all over, accurately speaking, she was clinging at the old woman that I was carrying on my back.

“Person from the church, please just leave me behind and run away with my grandchild. This is my last will!”

“Can't do that. After being told that, I end up wanting to save you two even more.” (Haine)

For now, I lower the old woman from my back, and face the giant dragonfly that's alone.

The giant dragonfly continues flying in place as it keeps an eye on us. As if measuring the timing to jump at us.

Noticing that, I purposely turn my eyes away from the giant dragonfly for an instant.

It was baited splendidly, and the dragonfly charges towards us.

“Now!!” (Haine)

While avoiding it with a hair's breadth, I place a hand on the head of the dragonfly that had come right where I am.

And then...

"[Dark Matter Set]" (Haine)

Dark particles surge out from my palm.

The giant dragonfly that came in contact with it had its head crushed, and it collapses.

This is the power I possess as the reincarnation of the Dark God.

What I did just now was Dark Matter, or so to speak, I have released darkness and created particles that normally don't exist in the natural environment with the dark divine power.

Its special characteristic is that it is able to absorb all elements excluding darkness and make them disappear.

On top of that, it can do things like freely controlling the direction of the gravity and the strength of it.

What I released just now was in a small dose, so to the old woman and the little girl, it must have looked like I crushed the head of the dragonfly with crazy strength.

Since its head was crushed, the dragonfly died, and the remaining parts turned into small grains of dust and disappeared.

This is what monsters are; living beings that are outside the principles of nature.

"It is safe now. Let's resume our return to the village." (Haine)

The moment I was about to turn to the old woman.

"Church person, at your back!"

The shout of the old woman made me return my gaze, and at that place, there was another giant dragonfly.

"A second one?!" (Haine)

Even though I defeated one just now, a new monster appeared.

Moreover...

“It is not only 2... there’s 3...4...10...20!!!” (Haine)

There’s already too many dragonflies to even count, and they were covering the sky.

To think there were this many...

It is not an amount I can’t wipe out by increasing the density of Dark Matter, but the old woman and the little girl will definitely be witnessing it.

The other choice would be to carry both the old woman and the little girl and run away swiftly, but against these giant dragonflies that have wings, moreover, with these numbers, I don’t think I would be able to outrun them.

Thinking about the natural state of this world, my dark divine power is something I would like keeping secret, but...it seems it can’t be helped. I will just have to hope that the old woman can keep it secret and that the little girl will be taken as fantasizing.

“[Dark Matter S—” (Haine)

“Wait there!!”

The sudden call made me hurriedly stop the dark matter that was about to come out from my palm.

An armoured girl is running here with ragged breath.

“Karen-san?!” (Haine)

“I’m glad. You are okay, right?! Pythonflies were gathering at an alarming rate, so I thought there was definitely something going on!” (Karen)

“Pythonflies?” (Haine)

“I am talking about those giant dragonflies there. A wind element monster, Pythonfly. As normal from a wind element, their body is fragile, but to compensate for that, they have wings and fast speed, and the most problematic part is that they act in swarms. The moment they find a human, they quickly gather like this.” (Karen)

Karen-san turns her gaze towards the old woman and the little girl.

“I understand the situation. Just leave the rest to me, Haine-san. Please protect the civilians.” (Karen)

“But fighting those numbers with just you alone would be—” (Haine)

“It is okay.” (Karen)

Karen-san unsheathes the sword that was hanging at her waist.

A beautiful white and shiny blade that doesn't lose to her hair and armor. A very straightforward sword.

“I have the light divine power that the Light Goddess has honoured me with. I became a hero in order to stand at the front and protect the powerless.”
(Karen)

The white blade shines. As if power was being gathered in it.

I remember seeing that before. At the time when I fought the knights at my homeland, captain Vesage had gathered light divine power inside a dagger when he shot the light arrow at me.

But the one that captain Vesage was using was only as big as a fruit knife, compared to the sword of Karen-san that is clearly a sharp sword that would be able to split a monster in two just as it is.

“Holy sword Saint-George that was given to me together with my title as the Light Hero, please release here the holy power that is gathered inside your body!” (Karen)

The light divine power that was released from the sword flew straight to the sky and bisects the Pythonflies that were at the edge of the swarm.

Something that I would call a light sword wave had been released from the sword of Karen-san. The light sword wave stretched widely from its sides, and perfectly sliced in two the swarm of Pythonflies that were a mass in the sky.

Several tens of giant dragonflies were falling, and before they reached the ground, they turned into dust.

“Incredible!!” (Haine)

With only one swing, she was able to defeat several monsters.

It is on a whole different level from the 'Holy Light Bullet' that captain Vesage used. So this is the power of the hero.

"...But..." (Haine)

The swarm of Pythonflies were still occupying the sky.

It is true that the 'Holy Light Blade' is big and unparalleled, and can cut down everything it touches, but it can be called a line attack. It wasn't enough to wipe the swarm that spreads around a whole side of the sky.

In other words, she did defeat a lot, but there's still a lot more left.

"It is okay. Until the last one falls, I will use the 'Holy Light Blade' as many times as it takes..." (Karen)

Or so Karen-san says passionately, but I wonder if she can really release a big move like that continuously.

"Stop it, Karen-san. The best move would be to use that technique to provide cover while we run with the civilians." (Haine)

"But if we don't wipe them out here and now, they might attack other people. As a hero, there's no way I can forgive tha—" (Karen)

At that moment, the voice of someone, that was not her or me, reverberated in the forest.

"[Flame Burst]"

At the next instant, the sky, that was covered by grotesque Pythonflies, was now covered by something entirely different.

Deep crimson red flames.

Those Pythonflies were burnt by those flames and became ashes, and not a single one remained as they disappeared.

"Wa?!" "What's this?!"

Karen-san and I were taken by surprise, and could only look at the crimson abnormality in the sky.

“Hmph, as I thought, the Light Hero is useless.”

And then, the shadow of a person appears. It was the same voice that resounded in the sky a few moments ago.

“In the end, you are not worthy of being called a hero. I am the only true hero. It is none other than the one that has received the divine power of the God, Nova-sama, the fire hero, Katak Mirack.”

Chapter 13: Second Hero

“...Fire hero, Katak Mirack?”

I look at the girl that suddenly appeared with surprise.

Even if I say girl, she is tall and has a suntanned skin, and at a glance, you would even mistake her for a man. But being able to identify her as a woman even with that is because of her breast area that was widely open.

【世直し暗黒神の奔走キャララフ：ミラク】



“Mirack-chan?!” (Karen)

“Serves you right, Kourin Karen.” (Mirack)

The girl called Mirack approaches Karen-san with rude steps.

She was practically picking a fight.

“Being cornered by something as weak as a Pythonfly, you weakling. If I hadn’t come in, who knows what would have happened?” (Mirack)

“...Yeah, thanks, Mirack-chan.” (Karen)

The attitude of Karen-san towards her was cowering, and the behaviour she has shown until now was completely in hiding.

By the way, in that time, I judged that the monsters were now gone and the danger had disappeared, so I returned to helping the old woman and her grandchild.

“R-Right, Haine-san! I will introduce you!” (Karen)

And Karen-san called me back.

“She is Katak Mirack-san. The fire hero.” (Karen)

“Hm?”

I don’t understand well.

“Wait, isn’t the hero Karen-san? Are there several heroes?” (Haine)

“No, I am the light hero. Haine-san also knows about the five Gods of creation, right?” (Karen)

“Yes, of course.” (Haine)

Remembering the times before I reincarnated, I end up feeling the urge to stab a fork inside the nose of each one of them.

“In this world, there’s churches that follow their respective God among the five. One of them is the Light Church that follows the Light Goddess, Inflation-sama. It refers to us.” (Karen)

“Okay...” (Haine)

“There’s also the churches that follow the Fire God, Nova; Water God, Coacervate; Wind God, Quasar; Mother Earth, Mantle. And each church has

their own hero that represents them. Mirack-chan is the fire hero that was chosen for the Fire Church.” (Karen)

“In that case, there’s five heroes in total?” (Haine)

“That’s r—” “Don’t joke around.”

Karen-san was going to answer, but Mirack interjects.

“There’s only one hero, the others are all fakes. And the real hero is me. Because I am the strongest hero within all the others after all. At the very least, I am better than a hero that may have thinned the monster swarm but had gotten the better of her.” (Mirack)

“Ah...”

The voice of Karen-san shrivels.

“Seriously, what a saddening way of fighting that was, light hero. Compared to that, I used ‘Flame Burst’ and wiped them all out. That proves the power that the Fire God, Nova-sama, has granted me is superior to that of the Light Goddess by leaps and bounds.” (Mirack)

“I don’t think that’s true.” (Haine)

“What?!” (Mirack)

Mirack turns to my direction, completely glaring at me. It was an anger that felt as if she would spit fire from her eyes, but I continued without caring.

“Karen-san’s ‘Holy Light Blade’ is a technique that sends a light sword wave of light divine power. Its power is high, but it can’t be considered a large area of effectivity. On the other hand, your ‘Flame Burst’, was it? That one is an attack that has large area of effectivity and is the type that spreads. Nova’s powers are mostly those types after all. The situation just now was

coincidentally

favorable for the fire element. Isn’t that all there’s to it?” (Haine)

“What’s with this weakling?! So conceited!!” (Mirack)

“Also, no matter how high-and-mighty you act, there’s a truth that’s unmoveable.” (Haine)

“What?!”

“The fact that Karen-san was the first one to arrive at the scene.” (Haine)

Being pointed out that, the loose tongue of Mirack-san had stopped.

She most likely didn’t have any words to refute it.

“If you are here, that means you came here promptly when you received the report of the monster sightings, but even so, Karen-san was faster. That’s why it was possible to save this old lady and her grandchild. That’s without doubt the achievement of Karen-san, not yours.” (Haine)

The old woman and her grandchild that had gotten back their composure gave their gratitude to Karen-san.

She was worried about the situation on this side, but right now she was responding to the two.

“Also, you were able to burn down the monsters in one swipe because Karen-san’s attack had gathered them into one location. If they were scattered here and there, even your fire wouldn’t have been able to wipe them out in one attack. It might even become a difficult fight with caution of not making a mountain fire.” (Haine)

“That’s stupid, something like that is just—!!” (Mirack)

“That’s the reality. In this time’s fight, the light hero that came here first was rescuing the people while luring the monsters, and then, the fire hero wiped them out. A victory through team play.” (Haine)

“Team...play?!” (Mirack)

“That’s right.” (Haine)

I grab the wrist of Mirack-san with my right hand, and with my left hand, I grab the wrist of Karen-san. And then, I bring both close to each other, and had the hand of Mirack-san and Karen-san hold each other.

“Wa?!” “?!!”

In the form of a handshake.

“As humans, as heroes; is there really any need to fight each other? Today’s

victory was the victory of you both. Let's all be happy together!" (Haine)

"Don't joke around!!!" (Mirack)

With more strength than I expected, the hands that were linked had been shaken off.

And with glaring eyes that were strong enough to ignite someone, she says.

"You! I don't know from what countryside you popped out from, but let me tell you this! For me, heroes are as much of an enemy as monsters! Only I am the true hero! I will also settle things up with the other ones in time! To prove who the true hero is!" (Mirack)

Saying what she wanted to say, she turned around and left.

We stood there.

In this forest where the monsters had been defeated and peace had returned, only the sad face of Karen-san remained.

Chapter 14: A conceited reflection time

“This was a failure! A failure! A BIG failure!!”

The place is the Light Church’s main headquarters, the meeting room at a section of the grand light church.

Suppressing the monster strife, escorting the people to their houses, and finishing the work that was left, Karen-san and I returned and we were soon called.

What was waiting for us there, were a lot of important-looking people.

One of the people there, an armoured knight, was losing his temper for some reason.

“Hero Karen! In this monster cleaning mission, there’s no other word to describe it but failure! To think we would have the glory stolen by the Fire Church!! That’s the worst! Is there any worse disgrace than this?!”

Is what the knight said as he slaps the pile of papers on top of the table.

I got interested in it, so I checked the pile of papers and there was this heading written there.

‘In the monster strife at the Trixia forest, the Fire Hero played a big role’

I know about this. This is called a newspaper.

Apparently, there’s an ethereal powered machine that is able to print the same words in several hundreds of papers. Using this, they spread around the daily news.

While we were in the middle of returning here, Karen-san was also interviewed by a newspaper reporter, and I who was accompanying her, learned about the existence of this.

“Hero Karen, what is your job as a hero?”

“...Protect the people from the threat of monsters.” (Karen)

“In that way, we show the outside world the majesty of the Light Church, and

in turn, increases the divine virtue towards the Light Goddess, Inflation-sama!
And yet, this time's result...made it look like our Light Church was lacking compared to the Fire Church!!"

"Knight Commander Dobbe, calm down—!"

"Do you think I can be calm here?!" (Dobbe)

The surroundings tried to calm him, but the armored knight that was called the knight commander didn't show any signs of calming at all.

Or more like, that's the Knight Commander?

"...Hero Karen. As a Knight Commander, I have questioned your aptitude as a hero for a long time now. This is a good opportunity, so today, I will be thoroughly placing the blame on you about this." (Dobbe)

"...Yes." (Karen)

Karen-san accepted the words of the Knight Commander without any energy.

Even though she just returned from the monster subjugation after doing her best, I haven't heard a single word of gratitude from them.

"First of all, hero Karen, at the time you were heading to the site, I heard that you utilized the small-sized flying machine. Is that true?" (Dobbe)

"...Yes." (Karen)

"That accursed machine that only corrupts us humans, the use of it is completely forbidden inside this church. For the hero herself to take the initiative and break the rules is inexcusable!!" (Dobbe)

"....."

"We will be disposing of that machine immediately. Listen here hero Karen, if you are going to act as the representative of our Light Church, have awareness of it, and follow the rule—" (Dobbe)

"Can rules kill monsters?"

Those words silenced the place.

No one showed any signs of interjecting, so I continue.

That's right, I was the one who spoke.

"Following the rules and defeating monsters; if you are able to do that and still manage to protect the people, then follow it as much as you want. But reality is different. Against an impending threat, rules serve nothing." (Haine)

"W-What did you say?!" (Dobbe)

The hostility of the Knight Commander was directed at me.

"What's with you?! I am the Aurora Knights' Knight Commander, Zeberphon Dobbe, you know! And you are going to go against me?!" (Dobbe)

"Giving out different opinions and looking for an unified answer, isn't that what a meeting is? Are you going to deny that very definition?" (Haine)

Karen-san who was at my side, was sending me worried gazes.

There's also several important-looking people that were surprised, but as expected, they didn't raise a single beep and were only looking at me as if looking at something curious.

That's why, I continued without caring.

"Then, Knight Commander-san, you looked down on the flying machine of Karen-san like it was the sworn enemy of your family, but it was thanks to this very machine that Karen-san was able to arrive at the scene first. And yet, even with that achievement, you will still be disposing of it. Isn't that a bit too unreasonable?" (Haine)

"Machines are things that corrupt humans and make people lose their faith towards God! Their very existence is evil! What's wrong with disposing of something like that?!" (Dobbe)

"Even though the one that has lost the most faith towards God is you?" (Haine)

"What?!" (Dobbe)

Chapter 15: Eloquence of the lowest strata

For the people that are in the meeting, just how do I look?

Inside the Light Church, I am a newbie among newbies that had just joined at the recruitment yesterday. Moreover, a grunt that was sent to the kitchen after being rejected from the exam.

And that bean sprout is right now hurling at the Knight Commander. If looked at it from a calm position, it is a situation where I wouldn't be able to complain even if I were to be executed for this rudeness.

Even so, since I have already rushed in, I will have to continue.

"I?! This Knight Commander here?! I -the Knight Commander, Zeberphon Dobbe-has lost my faith towards the Light Goddess, you say?! I would like you to stop your baseless accusations!" (Dobbe)

"In today's monster subjugation, it was truly tough, you know. Why didn't you come?" (Haine)

"Ugh."

"The number one job of the knight corps is to protect the people from monsters, right? And yet, you didn't run there. Just what were you doing?" (Haine)

I must have hit a sore spot, I could tell the vigor of the Knight Commander was withering.

"I heard from Karen-san; after receiving the report of monster sightings, the knight corps take 1 hour gathering, 1 hour preparing, and 3 hours to mobilize to the place. Is that right? In an emergency where every second counts, you guys waste time like crazy, and in the end, you wouldn't even be able to arrive at the place by the time it is over. I am surprised you are able to blame Karen-san who was the first arriving at the scene." (Haine)

"...T-That's why the view of an amateur is so shallow." (Dobbe)

The Knight Commander smooths over some composure.

“Listen well. It is not like just arriving at the scene is all that has to be done. When we arrive, we have to fight monsters, keep the damages to the minimum, and grab victory in those circumstances. For the sake of that, there’s the need for careful preparation, and because of it, it is a given that it will take time. When moving as an organization, mobilizing in itself will take time after all. To ignore that and just go at it by the standards of who arrives faster or slower would be—” (Dobbe)

“And as a result, you don’t make it in time for anything.” (Haine)

That short statement destroys the whole claim of the Knight Commander.

“Assembling the necessary things at the necessary moment is important. You have ignored the timing of assembling too much, and as a result, you served of no help at all. Even though you are in a position of being the Knight Commander.” (Haine)

“Gigigigi!!”

“Compared to that, Karen-san made swift judgment in this time of emergency, even utilized a flying machine, and rushed to the site faster than anyone else. As a result, she was able to save an old woman and a little girl that didn’t escape in time. Karen-san was able to achieve that much, and yet, she has to be blamed by you who didn’t do anything?” (Haine)

“Giiiiih!!!”

From the opening of the Knight Commander’s teeth, an unbelievable sound is produced.

His hand grabbed his sword.

The people at the meeting room raised their voices.

‘Oh? Is he going to rampage here?’, is what I thought, but at that moment...

“The thick-headedness of the Knight Commander is something that has been pointed out before.”

And so, one of the people sitting in the meeting said, moreover, it was the voice of a woman.

Reacting to this, the Knight Commander instantly calms down the bloodthirst

that was coming out from his body.

“F-Founder-sama...” (Dobbe)

“In the article that was written at the newspaper, looking well at it, it is referenced that Karen-san was the one who rushed head first to the place, and that in the end, it was the cooperation of the light and fire hero that led to the defeat of the monsters..... Kuromiya Haine-san.”

“Yes?” (Haine)

This woman I don’t know of called me by my full name and I get agitated.

Because she is wearing a priest robe, her age is hard to tell. A mysterious woman.

I can’t tell because her face is covered with a veil, but simply seeing her bearing and her tone of voice, I can tell that she is a peerless beauty.

“You were the one that provided this point of view, right? Thanks to the newspaper reporter having this piece of information, our Light Church was able to maintain its prestige.”

“Well, it is true that I did speak with the reporter as well.” (Haine)

“I have heard about you. I heard that you were personally scouted by Karen-san in order to increase the adapting ability of the knight corps. I am happy to see that there’s already achievements from you. I heard that your family is a family of hunters. That must have properly connected to this line of work as well..... Vice Captain, Dinron Grades.”

“Y-Yes!!” (Grades)

Being called by name, the bald Vice Captain stands up.

So he was here too.

“It would be bad to have a capable person like this without any role. With my authority, I accept Haine-san into the knight corps. You who are in charge of revising the newcomers, please find him a role that can allow him to move freely without being bound by the framework of the organization.”

“Hah?!Y-Yes!” (Grades)

I don't understand what's going on.

The Knight Commander interjects.

"Please wait, Founder-sama! I have not heard anything about that! If it's related to the personnel affairs of the knight corps, isn't there the need to say something to me as the Knight Commander?!" (Dobbe)

"Knight Commander, Dobbe, you will be taking the blame for the delay in this time's dispatch. In order to not repeat the same mistake, I will have you draft some reformation ideas."

"Ugh!"

The Knight Commander steps back to the firm words of the woman.

"The Fire Church's headquarters located at the fire capital, Muspelheim, are situated relatively close to this Apollon City, so both churches are mostly being compared at almost everything. If we are to get the better of again...Dobbe-san, you understand, right?"

"Y-Y-Y-Yes!!"

"I will ignore the use of the ethereal machine from the hero Karen-san this instance. Once the Knight Commander is able to come up with a reform plan that makes it possible to arrive quickly at the scene, we will discuss it again. Everyone, any questions?"

Not a single one of the several tens of important-looking people said anything.

Or more like, these people didn't say anything in all the meeting.

"Then, there's nothing more to discuss in this occasion. Karen-san, Haine-san, good work. You can retire for today and rest at ease."

"Y-Yes!" "Yes..."

When the woman stands up, two maids also followed behind as they left the meeting room.

That became the sign of the meeting finishing, the other important-looking people stood up from their seats one after the other.

Only one, the Knight Commander Dobbe stood up with a red face and kicked the seat he was sat on.

A noisy sound was made.

And then, he walked out from the meeting room angry.

This is something I learned later on but, that solemn woman was the founder, Yorishiro. The number one most important person that supervises this Light Church.

Chapter 16: True reflection time

And in this way, the meeting about the monster strife -that was more of a reflection meeting-ended, and I was freed.

However, it was a mysterious meeting where I didn't understand why I was in it as well.

A person with no title like me was able to speak as much as I wanted, and I feel like there will be retribution later on which makes me anxious.

"...Haine! Kuromiya Haine!"

When I leave the meeting room, an asphyxiating bald man was running towards me.

"Vice-captain Grades?" (Haine)

"Seriously, thanks!" (Grades)

Saying that, Vice-captain Grades lowers his bald head speedily. It even felt saddening in a way.

"I am truly sorry, and thanks for protecting the hero-sama at that time! In reality, we knights should be the ones acting as the shield for that person, and yet, I was worried about my rank and post, and was unable to say anything! Truly pathetic!!" (Grades)

"Eh? Doesn't that mean it is even worse for me who doesn't even have a rank or a post?" (Haine)

"No problem! The Founder-sama is serving as your backing after all! With that, even Knight Commander Dobbe won't be able to put a hand on you. Seeerves him riiight!" (Grades)

The tension of the baldy is high.

"...I really am pathetic. The job of us -Aurora Knight Corps-is to provide support to the hero-sama, and yet, the Knight Commander took the initiative to blame the hero, and us as group members couldn't stop it. Seriously, for what reason are we even here." (Grades)

“Vice-captain Grades...” (Haine)

“Can we talk for a bit, Haine?” (Grades)

Taken somewhere by the Vice-captain, we arrived at the light grand church’s garden.

Time has passed since the monster strife. The sun has already gone down, making it completely dark already.

“Do you know why the Knight Commander hates the ethereal machines so much?” (Grades)

“No... In the countryside I was living in, there were no such machines after all...” (Haine)

Vice-captain Grades searched for something in his pocket and takes it out.

It was a small and thin glass tube that was small enough to be held completely in his hand, and inside of it, there was some sort of black shining mineral.

“This is ethereal. Around 100 years ago, there was someone that found a way to smelt this from the earth. It released energy that’s able to move anything without the need for divine power. Cars and flying machines, and the element measuring device you used not that long ago as well; they all use these as their energy source.” (Grades)

‘That’s not all’, is what Grades says as he continues.

“Lamps, heating, clean water, fire used in cooking; right now, it is all done with ethereal power. When ethereal was discovered, it spread to the main cities in the blink of an eye, and it raised the living standard by several times. And then, can you tell what happened after?” (Grades)

“...People...stopped believing in God.” (Haine)

“That’s right! As I thought, you really are intelligent. Seriously, that’s exactly what it is. Because of ethereal, the civilization advanced, stabilized the food production, cured previously incurable diseases, and provided humans methods to go against natural disasters. With all that, there would be no need to pray to God, right?” (Grades)

That’s why machines are the enemies of the church huh.

If the machine culture develops and the need to entreaty to a God disappears, the people will steadily grow apart from God. That's why a person like the Knight Commander Dobbe, who's in a high position in the church, hates the ethereal machines to the point of completely forbidding them.

"Honestly speaking, the only problem ethereal can't solve is the monsters. By having the heroes fight the monsters as the leaders, The five churches -counting us-are somehow able to maintain the faith going." (Grades)

"Can't you make weapons from ethereal that can defeat monsters?" (Haine)

"About that, there was a joint signature from the five churches, making the use of ethereal weapons forbidden. Even the five churches, who normally don't get along with each other, were in accord with this one point. If this one point is broken, the church of God will without doubt be going to the trashcan."
(Grades)

People will...escape from the ruling of the Gods.

This is the thing that I wished for the most in my time as a Dark God. The other five Gods were at the side of 'humans are the slaves of Gods' and I went against it.

I fought and lost. And in the time I was sealed, I wonder what kind of path did humans walk.

What I understand is that, as a result of this thing called ethereal, everything was wrapped up.

"It is said that the reason for the monster's origin was maybe because the angered Gods sent this as punishment to the unfaithful humans. They began appearing around a hundred years ago, and it is right at the time when ethereal was discovered." (Grades)

"Sounds like it might possible. Seriously possible." (Haine)

"The church clamoured that 'monsters are the punishment for the corrupted humans!' as they fought the monsters, and by defeating them, they obtained fame. In that sense, monsters might be our saviors." (Grades)

"But Karen-san is...going so far as using ethereal machines to protect the

people.” (Haine)

“That’s right. That’s proof she is a true hero. She is not fighting for the sake of something like the authority of the church, she is purely doing it because she wants to save people. That’s why, for the sake of this, she will use whatever it is needed. The holy divine power and the ethereal machines as well. But for the higher-ups of the church, this is an eyesore.” (Grades)

The church fights monsters for the authority of the church...putting it another way, to protect the authority of God.

The reason Karen-san fights is to protect the people.

That discrepancy is hurting a single girl.

Within that discrepancy, a young one appeared who had no fetters and no position...

“So that was my role huh. To protect Karen-san, not only from monsters, but a variety of other things.” (Haine)

“That’s right.” (Grades)

Vice-captain Grades said this earnestly. In those words, there were various complicated emotions mixed in.

“It seems like at first, Karen-dono wanted to make you into a person that doesn’t move on the whim of the church, a person that’s truly a monster subjugator. She said that the moment she first saw you, she saw your abilities and sense of justice and felt that ‘if it’s him, he can do it’.” (Grades)

“Seriously?” (Haine)

I was bewildered.

“But when the moment came, you surpassed expectations. I truly didn’t expect you to stand against the Knight Commander. Or more like, since the moment I saw you stay at the side of Karen-dono and entering the meeting room, I thought I was hallucinating.” (Grades)

“Haha...Karen-san’s state was kinda strange since the time she met the Fire Hero, and it didn’t seem like it would be good to leave her be, so before I noticed, it ended up in that way.” (Haine)

“Seriously?! You really might be the personal knight for Karen-sama.”
(Grades)

“Did you seriously think that was a witty statement there?” (Haine)

“No no, I am simply vexed. Even when I called myself a knight, this cowardly self was unable to do anything.” (Grades)

This is what he says, but Grades-san is most likely a splendid knight.

Also, it is true that Karen-san’s state was strange. If it were the usual Karen-san, she would have spoken back to the Knight Commander, and there wouldn’t have been any need for me to step in.

The reason for this is as I thought, the Fire Hero, Katak Mirack.

When my thoughts reach that conclusion, I felt like I couldn’t just stay like this.

“Vice-captain Grades, sorry but, I will be excusing myself now.” (Haine)

“Yeah. Sorry for having you do overtime work, newcomer.” (Grades)

So Vice-captain Grades also understands my intentions. It looks like there’s no need to say anything more.

“Ah, BUT! Don’t go decreasing the distance between you two more than needed, okay?! If you dare do something like forming a romantic relationship with Karen-dono, the whole knight corp will beat you up!” (Grades)

As expected, he is a person that says a word too many.

Chapter 17: Frail Hero

I searched here and there for a good amount of time.

And then, I finally found Karen-san at the outside area of the light grand church. The storehouse of the flying machine.

“Ah, Haine-san.” (Karen)

Karen-san was holding some sort of tool in her hand.

“Uhm, are you doing that thing called maintenance? To that flying machine?” (Haine)

“Yeah. Whenever it is used, there’s the need to check its state later. It would be trouble if it were to act up in the middle of a flight after all.” (Karen-san)

So Karen-san does it herself.

She leads the knight corps, fights monsters, and while being in distress with the friction of the church’s higher-ups, she does maintenance to a machine.

This person does way too much by herself.

“Now that I think about it, I haven’t thanked you yet, right? I completely forgot. I really am fumbling way too much today.” (Karen-san)

“Did I do something to be thanked for?” (Haine)

“You did. A lot. Especially when you covered for me at the meeting room, it really saved me. If Haine-san hadn’t said anything, this little one might have been disposed of.” (Karen)

Saying that, Karen-san kindly pats the flying machine that’s currently in standby.

“But that...if that was the usual Karen-san, you would have been able to manage something yourself, right? That Knight Commander, I don’t think he is someone that Karen-san wouldn’t be able to handle. In normal circumstances, there would have been no need for me to step in.” (Haine)

“...Is that so?” (Karen)

“It is. Is the reason...the Fire Hero?” (Haine)

Karen-san was silent. She silently continued caressing the surface of the flying machine. It looks like the maintenance was finished a long time ago.

“Did you come here to ask that? You really like to stick your nose, Haine-san.”
(Karen)

“That’s why you dragged me here from my countryside village, right? It is too late to regret it. If you have any worries, try telling this big brother here.”
(Haine)

The head of Karen-san suddenly fell onto my body. I could feel the softness of her hair and a nice scent coming from her.

“Eh?”

It was so sudden that I didn’t know what was happening. Even if my soul is that of a Dark God, my body is that of a healthy 18 year old. I would normally react to a cute girl.

But...

“...Uuhh...uuuhh...”

The weeping voice that was coming from her quickly dispersed any immoral feelings.

“Ueee! Ueeeeeeee!!” (Karen)

Karen-san was crying.

The girl that is praised as the light hero and defeats great amounts of grotesque monsters resolutely, was currently showing weakness fitting of her age.

After crying for a while, she slowly spoke.

As if spilling out every single bit she had piled up to the very last.

The real reason why she felt like crying was not because of the blunder at today’s monster battle or the heartless words of the Knight Commander, it was as expected, her.

The Fire Hero, Katak Mirack.

Now that I think about it, since the moment she appeared, Karen-san's state was strange. And that strangeness was always there.

Both being heroes and rivals. My assumption that it was because of the shock of her stealing away the merit was wrong.

"I know of Mirack-chan. Since before I became a hero. A long time ago."
(Karen)

This is a story that is connected to Karen-san's own welfare.

In the present, Karen-san runs around freely as the light hero, but in her childhood, she had a weak constitution and constantly fell sick.

"It is unexpected, right?", is what Karen-san said trying to cover it as a joke, but for me, that hit me in the gut. A girl that possesses an inclined elemental affinity to light with a number of 700. That's definitely not something that only provides good effects to her body.

At any rate, in the childhood days of Karen-san, her daily life was a repeat of sleeping and waking up.

Of course, with that kind of lifestyle, it was impossible to make friends, and her child self was lonely. However, even with that, there was one person she could call a friend. A girl of the same age that lived at a neighboring house.

That's Katak Mirack.

Chapter 18: Young day's farewell

“The Mirack-chan in those days was completely opposite of me, an energetic girl that was seen as a boy by her surroundings.” (Karen)

So she isn't that much different from now.

Anyways, it seems their houses were next to each other, and their age and gender were the same, it took no time for them to get along with each other.

“Mirack-chan was considerate towards the weak me. Like a knight protecting me. And I got spoiled by it. We were always together. She was truly a friend I loved.” (Karen)

The turning point came.

It all began with the doctor that came to do a medical examination on Karen-san, and with that process, that person noticed the overwhelming light element she had.

The doctor recommended her to train her control of the light divine power as a method of medical treatment. And so, Karen-san began her training just as suggested.

Then, the excessively inclined element of hers that had been eating onto her until now, turned into a talent.

She was able to master her light element, the controlled divine power was no longer eating onto her, and she finally achieved a healthy body.

Her talent caught the eye of the light church, and she was enlisted to the Aurora Knights with fanfares.

It is said that there was practically no stumbling as she climbed her way to being the light hero.

And so, in that time, her neighboring friend had been completely estranged from her life.

“It is not like I forgot about Mirack-chan. But with my everyday training, I didn't have the time to meet her—no, that's not it. I had fun training to control

my light divine power. I had so much fun, I placed Mirack-chan as secondary. That's why...!" (Karen)

When they met after several years later, Katak Mirack had become a hero as well. And she was no longer Karen-san's friend.

The clear words of Mirack towards Karen-san: 'You are not a friend. You are an enemy'.

The light hero and the fire hero; the representatives of their respective churches that are fighting with each other to obtain honor -the very definition of enemies.

Until today, there were several times where she had the chance to meet face-to-face with Mirack, but her attitude never softened.

That had cut the heart of Karen-san into pieces.

"...It is my fault. I was the one who abandoned Mirack-chan first after all. That's why, no matter how much she hates me, it is my fault. Mirack-chan has done nothing wrong!" (Karen)

Karen-san tried to say it firmly, but her tears had already drenched almost half of my shirt.

If someone were to find this scene and witnessed the hero crying her eyes out, it would probably spread through the whole grand church by tomorrow, and there would be blood raining.

"I am truly a hopeless hero. Just how many times do I have to thank Haine-san today?" (Karen)

Crying as much as she needed, saying as much as she needed, she was slowly recovering her usual liveliness.

Even so, she was unable to get rid of that nasal voice.

"It might be a bit inappropriate to say this at this moment but, today, incredibly good things happened to me." (Haine)

"Eh?"

"I learned about these things called ethereal machines, and I was able to

confirm that humans have properly developed with the long passing of time. As expected, humans are incredible, humans are strong! No matter how harsh and painful their environment is, they are able to climb over it!" (Haine)

That's why...

"Karen-san can climb over it as well! Right this instant! Let's go!" (Haine)

I straddle on the flying machine that recently finished maintenance. I somewhat learned about how to ride it by seeing Karen-san before.

"Karen-san, ride on my back!" (Haine)

"Eh? Ride? Where are we going?! Or more like, can you drive this, Haine-san?!" (Karen)

"The Founder-sama said this at the meeting, right? That the city, where the Fire Church's main headquarters are, is pretty close." (Haine)

"Eh?! EEEEEEH?!!" (Karen)

Placing Karen-san at my back, the small flying machine flew into the sky.

"No way!! You are really driving it?!!! Moreover, flying at night?!!!" (Karen)

*

After around one hour, we arrive at the objective.

The Fire Church located at the fire capital, Muspelheim. The inner sanctuary of fire.

That building trembled.

"What?! What was that shock?!" "An enemy attack! An enemy attack!!" "An enemy attack?! Are you saying monsters have invaded?!" "No, that's not it! That's a human!!" "Wa?!!" "Those guys of the Light Church have invaded!!"

The people of the Fire Church were in chaos.

And so, after randomly going around the Fire Church, the person we were searching for arrived herself.

"What's this?! What are the Ignis Militant corps flustered about?!"

The Fire Hero, Katak Mirack.

Finding us, the color of her face changes.

“Yooou!!! W-What’s your business? Did you come here to get back at us for what happened this morning?!” (Mirack)

“Fire Hero, Katak Mirack, I have come here with a proposition.” (Haine)

While hovering with the flying machine, I say this.

By the way, Karen-san was still clinging to my back and was all stiffened.

“Proposition, you say?!” (Mirack)

“We want to make an official collaborative relationship with the Fire Hero and the Light Hero. Unite the power of two heroes to fight against monsters.”
(Haine)

Chapter 19: Two heroes, two girls

“Cooperation, you say?!”

Mirack frowned heavily at my proposal.

“You, you are the guy that was together with the light hero this morning, right? Didn’t you hear what I said? All heroes aside from me are my enemies!”
(Mirack)

“That’s not true. The enemy of the heroes are the monsters.” (Haine)

Maybe because I refuted so firmly, Mirack looked daunted for a second.

I see this as a chance and attack at once.

“Protecting humans from the danger of monsters. Isn’t that the most important duty of heroes? And yet, not cooperating as heroes and fighting each other is only inefficient and an insult to your position.” (Haine)

“What did you say?!” (Mirack)

“Hero-sama! Please leave this to us!”

Saying this, from the side of Mirack and I, a group of muscular men came out.

“The Ignis Militant corps have arrived! You rioter of the light church, we are not gonna let you do as you wish in our territory!”

It is probably an organization that serves the same purpose as the Aurora Knight corps of the Light Church.

“Don’t go exaggerating, we were only having a reasonable discussion here.”
(Haine)

“Don’t joke around! Would a person looking for a reasonable discussion invade with a flying machine with no appointment at all?!”

“The atmosphere asked for it, so it can’t be helped.” (Haine)

“No way it couldn’t be helped!!”

They do have a point.

“No way around then. In that case, just take it as me being the only one who came here to pick a fight with you guys. Can you let those girls have a talk?”
(Haine)

“Haine-san?!” (Karen)

Ignoring the worried voice of Karen-san, I jump down from the flying machine.

“In the time I am fighting you guys, our hero will have an audience with yours.” (Haine)

“You are going to be fighting us on your own?! We will be crushing you in less than a second!”

The number of militants here are more than a hundred even when I just check at a glance. Taking into account that this is their main headquarters, the numbers will most likely increase more.

“[Heat Knuckle]!!!”

“Uwa.”

I catch the slow punch of the militant-san that rushed towards me, and his fist was incredibly hot.

“Hot!!” (Haine)

I let off in surprise, but as expected, it is an attack with fire divine power added to it. Compared to the ‘Flame Burst’ of Mirack, it is a lot weaker, but it is definitely similar to the difference of the light hero Karen-san and the Aurora Knight corps.

And then, the militants came to attack me in the same way one after the other, and at the side of this situation that had turned into a brawl, there’s Karen-san and Mirack. The two girls were facing each other.

“Mirack-chan...” (Karen)

“To think you would resort to such a reckless action. Well then, let’s go at it as well.” (Mirack)

Saying this, Mirack takes a fighting pose.

I watch over this situation as I handle the the muscular attacks that came right and left.

“That’s not it, Mirack-chan! I—!” (Karen)

“Like hell it is not! After doing something that’s practically a night raid, there should be no other reason but to want to settle things! We have to clearly settle who is the better hero sooner or later after all! I will make this the first act. Light hero, you are my first prey!” (Mirack)

“...It is true that what Haine-san is doing is absurd, and I can’t keep with his pace at all. But I understand what he is trying to have me do.” (Karen)

Karen-san unsheathes the holy sword Saint-George from her waist...and places it on the ground.

“You!!”

“The light hero, Kourin Karen, once again asks of the fire hero, Katak Mirack; please, let us join forces to fight against monsters. Please fight together with me in order to protect the people from the threat that is scattered around the world.” (Karen)

Saying this, Karen-san lowers her head deeply.

If there were a high-ranked member of the light church here witnessing this scene, that person might have gone mad in anger.

The representative of the church -their hero-was lowering her head towards a hero of a different church. With only that one point, it might be taken as the light church standing below the other churches after all.

“Karen, you...” (Mirack)

Mirack also understood the meaning of it and her body had stiffened.

“Also, sorry. Since the time I entered the light church, I couldn’t meet Mirack-chan at all. Now that I think about it, I didn’t give my farewells either. You might be angry at someone like me. Mirack-chan has her own objective, and that objective might have nothing to do with me. But I... I want to become a proper friend of Mirack-chan!!” (Karen)

At some point in time, the Ignis Militant corps had stopped their attacks and

were looking at the talk of the two girls.

And there was one of them who had stiffened into a grappling stance with me. That person said this.

“...Hey you.”

“What is it?” (Haine)

“Did you bring that girl here for this?”

“That’s right.” (Haine)

“You are a nice guy.”

That’s not true.

Was Karen-san able to hit Mirack with all her feelings?

In regards to that, Mirack...

“...This is stupid!” (Mirack)

Said this with deep wrinkles between the bridge of her nose.

“I was wondering what you were going to say, and you come with this! I am a hero. I am different from my child self that didn’t know anything at all! There’s no way I would go playing friends!” (Mirack)

(Eh?!)(Wa?!)(Hero-sama, that’s too much!!) <probably whispers>

I mix in with the people of the Ignis Militant corps and watch over the girls with sweat in my hands.

Karen-san was incredibly dejected by this answer.

“.....But...” (Mirack)

“Eh?”

“It is true that there are a lot of monsters. It is troublesome to defeat them all myself, and it would be nice to have others helping out. However, even with that...” (Mirack)

The eyes of Mirack shine sharply.

“If it’s you who showed such unsightly fight like the one this morning, I can’t

entrust you with helping either. That's why, I will be confirming your ability again. If you show skills that convince me, I don't mind accepting this talk about joining forces!" (Mirack)

The surroundings went 'Ooooh!' and clapped.

"Hmph, but this kind of proposal is nothing but a disgrace to a hero. If you don't want to, you can refuse, you know?" (Mirack)

"I will do it! I am going to! Let me!!" (Karen)

"O-Okay..." (Mirack)

The vehement acceptance of Karen-san made Mirack grow timid as she responded.

"And so, what should I do?! Defeat 300 Ignis Militants?" (Karen)

""""Please no!!!""""

The militants cry out.

This already feels like a live stage.

"I wouldn't have you do something like that. There's something better, a mountain." (Mirack)

"A mountain?!"

The militant, who was still in a grappling stance with me, showed clear agitation at those words.

"Eh? What? Do you know something about this?" (Haine)

"...Walking one whole day from this Fire Church headquarters, there's the Radonna mountainous district. Just 1 year ago, it was a place that had a picturesque natural scenery, but now, it is a wasteland with not a single blade of grass growing on it."

"Why is that?" (Haine)

"Because an atrocious monster is now living in it. It is robust and grand. Us Fire Church contemplated on subjugating it, but we didn't manage to succeed even once. Hence, it is still alive, and still there. It has become the ruler of the mountain."

The militant spits out the name of that monster with bitterness.

“The fire cow, [Phalaris](#). A gigantic cow-shaped fire element monster.”

Chapter 20: Joint Subjugation

The next day arrived and we headed to the Radona mountain district.

The members are Karen-san, Mirack, and I.

“Why me as well...” (Haine)

While walking in this mountain trail, I think of how out-of-place I am here.

“Isn’t that obvious?! The one who proposed this first was Haine-san, so I will have you tag along till the end!” (Karen)

Karen-san who is walking ahead, had a somewhat strict tone.

Could it be...she is angry?

“Ah, Haine-san, just now you thought I was angry, right? Isn’t that obvious? I was brought to the Fire Church without being given a single notice beforehand, and with no preparation at all, I was made to face Mirack-chan. Can you imagine just how much of my mental strength was chipped away with that?” (Karen)

Not only did she see through what I was thinking, she even placed incredible pressure onto me.

“...It is true that that was a bit too quick tempered. Sorry.” (Haine)

“Seriously. Sure, I scouted Haine-san in order to have someone protect the people freely without being bound by regulations, but I didn’t think you were a person that acted in such a free manner!” (Karen)

I only heard about that from the Vice-captain Grades though.

“I didn’t think you would even try to save me as well!” (Karen)

“Am I really that free of a person?” (Haine)

“You are. To the point that you touched the boobs of a hero in the heat of the moment and acted as if nothing happened.” (Karen)

Ah, something like that did happen.

I remember that we completely let that wash by. This is bad. Karen-san is

unexpectedly the type that holds grudges.

“...I...didn’t have any intentions of having anyone touch my boobs aside from my future husband.” (Karen)

“Eh?”

“That’s why, don’t go acting kind and make me misunderstand things, okay?!” (Karen)

Karen-san one-sidedly cuts off the conversation and runs ahead.

And then, I was punched from behind.

“Ouch! ...Why did you punch me, Fire Hero?!” (Haine)

“How should I know, pervert man.” (Mirack)

Katack Mirack normally had an ill humoured expression, but it was even more ill humoured than normal.

“Is the light church composed only of fools? We are not climbing the mountain in order to have a picnic. How about you guys have a bit more tension?” (Mirack)

“Do we really look that foolish?” (Haine)

“Don’t tell me you have even forgotten the reason why we are climbing this mountain. Now go ahead, say it.” (Mirack)

“It is to defeat the monster that is using this mountains as a nest~” (Haine)

Since around one year ago, a monster has been living in this mountain district.

The name that was given to it by the humans was the fire cow, Phalaris.

This monsters was so gigantic, that even the subjugation force that the Fire Church sent was turned the tables on, and because of it, entrance to the Radona mountain district was forbidden for the normal populace and deemed as a dangerous zone.

“I didn’t know there was such a monster. Even though the Light Church’s headquarters neighbour the Fire Church’s headquarters.” (Karen)

Karen-san once again joins the conversation.

“Looking at it from the Light capital, Apollon City, this Raguna mountain range is just at the shadow of the Fire capital, Muspelheim. It seems like the Fire Church used that geographical relation to hide this. If the other churches know that there’s a monster they couldn’t defeat and are ignoring, it would be a disgrace after all.” (Haine)

“Wait a moment! Why do you know even that?!” (Mirack)

Mirack was shock-struck and I casually continue.

“The people of the Ignis Militant corps gave me as much information as they had before heading here. They have a muscular look, but they are quite the kind people.” (Haine)

“Those guuuuys!!!” (Mirack)

And the Ignis Militant corps also wanted to accompany us, but Mirack rejected it.

The monster we are about to fight is dangerous enough to reject anyone with half-baked skills.

“From what I have heard, the previous fire hero was defeated by this fire cow, Phalaris, and ended up having to retire. If the successor, Mirack-san, were to succeed in the subjugation of this Phalaris, there’s no doubt your fame in the church will rise sky high.” (Haine)

This is also information I received from the Ignis Militant corps.

“Could it be...you used the ‘skill testing’ as a pretext in order to have Karen-san cooperate in that objective of yours...?” (Haine)

“No way! I just...!” (Mirack)

“Even if that’s true, I am fine with it.” (Karen)

Just when it was about to become a quarrel, Karen-san’s statement stopped it.

“I am fine with letting all the honor of defeating the monster go to Mirack-chan. If with that I am able to become friends with Mirack-chan, I am fine with it. I am also asking for the unreasonable here, so Mirack-chan has to get equal merit for it as well.” (Karen)

“Karen...” (Mirack)

“Also, if we defeat a strong monster, we can give peace of mind to the people in the area. That’s without doubt the job of a hero. Let’s do our best, Mirack-chan! Let’s defeat the monster together!” (Karen)

Saying this, Karen-san once again takes the front.

Mirack and I get left behind.

“...You once again acted on unnecessary consideration, right?” (Mirack)

“Hah?” (Haine)

“Wiping away any misgivings before the fight. By bringing out a hard to say topic yourself, you avoided any awkwardness between Karen and I. If the same question had been brought out from the mouth of Karen, no matter how I answered, it would still have left some lingering discomfort. Karen also properly wrapped it up. Without giving me a chance to say a single thing.” (Mirack)

“Now now, aren’t you just overthinking?” (Haine)

“On that basis, I will answer you. I have no intentions of taking the honor of this at all. It is actually the contrary.” (Mirack)

“Eh?”

“This subjugation will fail big time. By asking for an impossible task, I am planning on turning down your proposal. You still don’t understand how fearsome that thing is. Look.” (Mirack)

Saying this, Mirack points at the place we are headed to.

There, the mountain trail still continues and there’s no monsters in sight. That’s how it is supposed to be, but...

“Have a good look. That guy is already within vision.” (Mirack)

However, the only thing we could see was a splendid mountain range.

No, wait. One of the mountains that compose this mountain range...was slowly moving.

That wasn’t a mountain, but the back of a giant cow...

“That’s right. That is the fire cow, Phalaris. The largest monster in the history of the five churches that has been sighted.” (Mirack)

Chapter 21: Gigantic Monster

The Radona mountain district was originally an area filled with green and warm temperature. And it was also a fertile land that had beautiful flowers blooming where tourists would come to sightsee.

However, now it is a barren land with ashen earth.

“It is the fault of that guy.”

Hidden in the shadows of the rocks, Mirack, Karen, and I observe the monster that had the same ashen color as that of the earth’s surface.

Seriously, looking at it closely like this, you can really tell how gigantic it is. The more you have to look up at it the more it felt as if I am looking at a real mountain.

“It is the heat that that fire element monster is scattering about. All the plants in the mountains have dried, and the living beings there have all died. Thanks to that, the current Radona mountain district doesn’t have a single shadow of its former self; they are now naked mountains.” (Mirack)

“Fire element huh. From the looks of it, it seems more of an earth type though.” (Karen)

Seeing the figure of the gigantic monster, Karen-san spills out her impression.

But even so, it must be a fire element. As if proving the explanation of Mirack about it ‘scattering heat’, even in this far away distance where we can observe it, the air was filled with heat and it felt like we were inside a furnace.

For a while now, Karen-san, Mirack, and I have been sweating nonstop.

“Or more like, even monsters have elements huh.” (Haine)

“Hah? What are you saying? That’s obvious.” (Mirack)

Mirack looks at me as if looking at an idiot.

“It is because monsters have elements that us humans have to use our heads in order to fight them with that in mind.” (Mirack)

“There’s element affinities after all.” (Karen)

Affinity?

“Fire drives away wind, wind dries and crumbles earth, earth absorbs water, and water extinguishes fire. Those are the affinities of the elements. For example; the Pythonflies that appeared at the forest the other day were wind element monsters, hence, they were weak against fire. Being able to wipe them out with my ‘Flame Burst’ was also because of that reason.” (Mirack)

“But this time, the fire cow Phalaris is a fire element. With Mirack-chan who has the same fire element as that, it would turn into a pure battle of strength. So, how is it?” (Haine)

“Do you think something can be done against it? Against that gigantic thing?” (Mirack)

Those words were incredibly convincing.

For a woman, Mirack’s height is pretty good, even so, when standing against that gigantic monster the size of a mountain, she is the size of an ant in comparison.

“However, only the light element has no weak elemental affinity, and is a special element that is a little bit stronger against all elements. If you were to fight it, there might be a bit of hope?” (Mirack)

Mirack asks this of Karen-san in a slightly teasing manner.

Just a few moments ago, Mirack said that she was giving an impossible task to turn down the proposal, which was bothering me.

If we were to defeat that monster, Mirack promised to form a cooperative relationship.

But she thinks there’s no way Karen-san can defeat the fire cow Phalaris.

“Understood.” (Karen)

Without hesitating, Karen-san unsheathes the holy sword Saint-George.

“Please stay hidden, Haine-san. From here on, this is the job of us heroes. Mirack-chan and I will definitely defeat that thing.” (Karen)

On top of that, Karen-san jumps out of the shadows.

“[Holy Light Blade]!” (Karen)

The light sword wave was released from her holy sword.

Since the target was real big, it was a hit. But that’s where the problem comes.

The ashen skin of the gigantic monster repelled the light sword wave.

The light disperses futilely. There wasn’t a single wound at the surface of the monster.

“The fire cow Phalaris’ skin is as hard as steel. In the past, it faced the joint attack of the Ignis Militant corps, but not only did it not receive any damage, it didn’t even move. Steel skin and a gigantic mass; with those two combined, it is impossible to wound that guy.” (Mirack)

“Mirack! This is not the time to be calmly analyzing this, right?!” (Karen)

Karen-san’s attack didn’t amount to a wound, but it was enough to make the gigantic monster notice our presence.

It slowly turned to our direction.

“Bumooooo!!”

With a bellow, crimson fire spewed out from the surface of the monster.

The real reason why it was called the fire cow, we would learn it at this moment.

Chapter 22: Genuine heroes

“Kyaaaaa!!”

Karen-san was exposed to the crimson flames that surged forth like a tsunami.

“Karen-san!!” (Haine)

“Don’t come!” (Karen)

I was about to reflexively jump out, but that person stopped me.

“[Holy Light Wall]!” (Karen)

Light flutters like a lace curtain and becomes a boundary line between Karen-san and the assailing flames.

“So she was able to properly defend against it.” (Mirack)

In the time Mirack was commenting about it, Karen-san attacked once again.

“[Holy Light Blade]!” (Karen)

But the light sword wave was repelled by the iron skin again and disperses. It wasn’t any different from before.

“The skin of the fire cow is steel itself, moreover, it is a lot harder than it and sturdier as well. In the past, I tried attacking it several times with ‘Flame Burst’, but it didn’t work at all. No one can defeat that guy.” (Mirack)

“You! You knew that and still challenged Karen to do it?!” (Haine)

“Calm down. There’s one good thing.” (Mirack)

“?”

“The general monsters only attack humans. If there’s no humans in their sight, they move until they find their prey. Just like the Pythonflies the other day.” (Mirack)

“What about that? Why did you bring that topic now?” (Haine)

“But, only that fire cow Phalaris hasn’t shown that type of behaviour. No

matter if there's humans or not, it stays in this Radona mountain district without moving at all. It is normally only when we are the ones attacking. That's why a monster as big as this can be managed with just observing and we are able to leave it alone." (Mirack)

"In other words, this is what you mean?" (Haine)

That even if Karen-san were to lose, it wouldn't matter at all?

Even if she were to lose, nothing will change?

"Why?! Karen-san truly wants to fix the relationship she had with you, and yet, why are you throwing such an impossible task to her in order to push her apart?!" (Haine)

"What do you understand about me?!" (Mirack)

Mirack slaps away my arm that was grabbing her collar.

"You see, when I was a kid, I was always aiming to become a hero. I wanted to become the strongest human! That's why I did my best, and trained my element number. But it took me several years after I began training before I discovered that I didn't have much talent!!" (Mirack)

In other words, she is referring to Karen-san.

The pitiful sickly girl that lived in the neighboring house. For Mirack who was aiming for absolute strength, that friend of hers had become her target for protection in order to confirm her own strength.

But one day, her weak friend that was supposed to be protected by her climbed high up.

That rarely seen light element number ended up with her being welcomed to the Aurora Knight corps with fanfares.

"I heard about her becoming a light hero, just in the time when I failed my first entrance exam to the Ignis Militant corps. Do you understand? Do you understand how vexed I felt at that time?! I was a lot more straightforward, aimed directly to become a hero, and became a hero! Entering the Ignis Militant corps after my third try, I gained strength under the gruelling training of my superiors, obtained achievements from a great number of battles, was

acknowledged by everyone, and finally became a hero! That's the fire hero, Katak Mirack!" (Mirack)

"What does that have to do with why you can't get along with Karen-san?" (Haine)

"It does. I am a real hero that climbed with effort. She is a fake hero that was given her position carefreely only because of her talent! There's no way a fake hero and a real hero can get along!" (Mirack)

The sound of a slap resounded in the place.

Mirack who was slapped in the cheek looked back at me dumbfounded, the person who slapped her.

"Mirack, it is wonderful that you worked hard to reach your objective and managed to show results. The growth of humans is exactly the repeat of this. You did your best and became a hero, that's of course something amazing." (Haine)

But...

"Excessive effort will always bring forth strain somewhere. At the very least, there's definitely no way that a real hero and a fake hero can be decided by the amount of effort they put in. Then, what's the real line that decides whether you are a real or a fake? As long as you don't understand that, Mirack, you are the fake hero." (Haine)

Saying what I had to say, I run off.

At the front, the fight still continues. But well, it is a situation where the light protective wall of Karen-san is somehow managing to stop the sweltering heat that the monster is releasing.

In this time when attacks don't work at all, there's no way to turn the situation.

And so, I stick to the back of Karen-san.

"Haine-san?! You can't come. This place is dangerous!!" (Karen)

"Let's retreat, Karen-san! Mirack-san had us fight it knowing full well from the beginning that you wouldn't be able to defeat it! It seems like there won't be

any damage even if we leave it alone so, there's no point in fighting it!" (Haine)

"No, there is!!" (Karen)

She said it so firmly that I couldn't say anything back.

"Such a giant monster, just its mere existence is an incredible threat! It might not be attacking people right now, but what about tomorrow? The day after, after years later?! In order to prevent damage before it happens, this is our chance!" (Karen)

"Chance?! Right now?!" (Haine)

"That's right. The fire and light heroes fighting together, that has never happened before! Right now she is stepping back in order to gauge my strength, but she will definitely come to my rescue!" (Karen)

Karen-san still believes in Mirack.

And she has no intentions of stepping back. Because in the place where she would retreat, there's the weak people that she had resolved to protect after all.

"...Karen-san, please listen." (Haine)

"Eh?"

"They say that that monster's skin is steel itself, but there's no way that's true. If all its body were hard as steel, it wouldn't be able to move its body. The joint areas like the legs and the neck will definitely have some sort of opening for mobility, which must be softer." (Haine)

"...Then, if we aim at those places!" (Karen)

Karen-san acted fast. She ran around the big monster in an instant.

"I found it! There really was!" (Karen)

The space that connects the legs with the body. A deep wrinkle that is between the steel hardened skin. It is like an opening similar to that of helmets.

There's no doubt it is an opening that exists in order to move the hardened skin.

"Okay. Aiming at that opening...!" (Karen)

The moment Karen-san took her stance.

The skin of the monster once again leaks out sweltering heat, and that heat attacks Karen-san and I.

“Kyaa!! This can also attack?!” (Karen)

“[Dark Matter, Set]!” (Haine)

The dark matter that comes out from both of my hands. Fine particles come out in numbers of millions to form a black current and it receives the heat, perfectly shutting it out.

The dark matter that can absorb all elements and negate them was able to serve as a defensive wall plenty well, and the wave created was less compared to the time it was blocked with the light wall.

“Haine-san?! What was that power?!” (Karen)

“Don’t mind it right now! Just attack that thing aiming at the opening!”
(Haine)

Of course, it would be easy to counter with my dark matter. But that won’t do.

In this world, defeating the monsters and bringing hope to the people is the role of the chosen heroes.

That’s what a real hero is.

“...Yes!” (Karen)

Accepting it, Karen-san once again concentrates light divine power into her holy sword.

“This small opening...a ‘Holy Light Blade’ won’t be able to get it. I have to make it smaller, and concentrate the power even more!!” (Karen)

Thrusting the tip of the sword to the front, she positions it as if she were aiming with a bow.

“Now! Haine-san, undo the black wall!” (Karen)

Following the words of Karen-san, I stop the emission of my dark matter, and in that instant when the heat was about to reach Karen-san...

“[Holy Light Blade]!” (Karen)

The holy sword stretched, accurately speaking, the light divine power stretched from its tip, and it slipped right inside the opening of the fire cow’s joint.

“Pierce a soft spot!” (Karen)

“Bumoooooooo!!”

For the first time, the pained cry of the fire cow was heard.

At the same time, a massive amount of heat was released.

I once again emit dark matter from one hand, and with the other, I hold Karen-san and take shelter.

“Incredible! Haine-san, it worked!” (Karen)

“It finally did. Then, this time, let’s search for more opening and—?!” (Haine)

(...What are you doing, damn humans.)

“?!”

Suddenly, a voice rings inside my head.

There’s no reaction from Karen-san who is right by my side. Then, I am the only one who hears it?

(But, it looks like there’s one mixed in that’s not a human. It has been long since I have seen dark matter. 1,600 years long, that is.)

Where?! Who is talking?!

Aside from the people I know, there’s no presence of anyone else around. Because of that fire cow, this is a naked mountain without a single blade of grass. There’s no way there’s someone hidden.

No, there’s one.

Another one aside from Karen-san, Mirack, and I that is in this place.

The bright red eyes of that fire cow that are staring right at me by turning its gigantic neck.

(I will never forget it. Even when you are in the same position as a God like us,

you went against the very meaning of it; the traitor. Emitting dark matter, moreover, being able to freely control it; there's only one who can do that.)

That voice...is it coming from the fire cow Phalaris?

The thought waves that were directly resonating in my body. On top of that, this voice sounds familiar. The tone, its sound; it overlaps with one of the five Gods that I separated from 1,600 years ago.

(That's right. Long time no see, Dark God, Entropy.)

Then, you really are...this monster is...

.....One of the five Gods of creation, the Fire God, Nova.

Chapter 23: Fire God

The Fire God Nova is one of the five Gods of creation and the God that governs fire.

Burning everything, turning it into ashes, and from there, create new things; a God of destruction and rebirth.

This guy is also the one Mirack and the Fire Church follow.

Why am I hearing the voice of that Fire God...from this monster?

(...It has been long, Dark God Entropy. Since the time I joined forces with the others to seal you 1,600 years ago. I still remember your mortified face when you were about to be enclosed in that eternity, you know?) (Nova)

Karen-san and Mirack, who are farther away, showed no reaction.

It is probably a thought channel that only works between Gods and he is speaking directly to my head.

(I didn't know you came back, moreover, to think you would reincarnate in a human. Looks like your bad habit of supporting this frail insects is still there.) (Nova)

In other words, you...reincarnated in a monster huh. Into that fire cow Phalaris.

That would explain a variety of things. This big frame and strength that overwhelms that of other monsters. Actions that don't apply to the usual pattern.

If a God is dwelling inside that monster, it is obvious that it would be cheat-like in a lot of things.

(How did you come back? In our calculations, you should still be sealed for a while more.) (Nova)

(I was brought out, by the Light Goddess Inflation.) (Haine)

(Tch!! That fox woman, so she is scheming something again in a place we don't know of!! Can't lower my guard with her since 1,600 years ago!!) (Nova)

(Well, that's fine. I have a lot of things to ask you guys. It is convenient for me that you have come yourself.) (Haine)

(You have been sleeping for 1,600 years so you have been left out from the flow of time and became a complete country bumpkin huh. Okay. We are both Gods. I will answer to a certain extent.) (Nova)

(First of all, it has to do with that interesting figure you have right now. Regarding monsters.) (Haine)

(Hah?) (Nova)

(Monsters. Before I was sealed, such monsters didn't exist. But now, they are appearing here and there in this world and causing problems to the humans. Who was the one who created them?) (Haine)

(Who do you think?) (Nova)

(You guys. The five Gods of Creation. Even if they are warped, they are still a form of living being, and creating living beings is the act of Gods. In that case, there's no other ones capable of doing this but you guys. You are Gods after all.

In the first place, it is suspicious that monsters have elements. There's wind element monsters, fire element monsters.

There's no doubt the ones who created those are the five Gods of their respective element.

The earth element monsters by the Mother Earth, Mantle; water element monsters by the Water God, Coacervate; wind element monsters by the Wind God, Quasar; and fire monsters by the Fire God Nova, in other words, you.

The children will resemble their parents. Hence, the monsters that were created by their Gods, hold the element of their respective creator.

As if it were a brand.) (Haine)

(You said you wanted to ask questions, and yet, you already answered it all yourself. What are you trying to achieve here?) (Nova)

(There's the need to check for the answer when deducing, right? You only have to answer with a Yes or No.) (Haine)

The Fire God that is wearing the skin of a monster makes a: 'Gufufu' sound inside this telepathic conversation, and answers,

(.....Yes.) (Nova)

As I thought huh.

(Why are you doing something like that? Didn't you five Gods already obtain total control rights after sealing me?

In this world that you could do whatever you wanted, why are you destroying it yourselves?) (Haine)

(...Because it couldn't become ours.) (Nova)

(What?)

(Because it wouldn't go as we wanted. Dark God Entropy, in the time you were asleep, the world has changed. Changed into something unsightly and distorted. Everything began...right, with the thing called ethereal.) (Nova)

Chapter 24: The Truth of the World

(Ethereal? The new material that was discovered by humans around 100 years ago? The one that releases energy, powers machines, and advances civilization heavily?) (Haine)

(That's right! That's no good! Humans can't advance!!) (Nova)

Hah?

(There's no need for humans to evolve. They just have to stay stupid, weak, prostrate to us Gods and obey us. And yet, when that shit called ethereal was dug out, they used it to make running machines, machines that create fire, machines that purify water, machines that plow the earth; they created a variety of machines. As a result, humans began to think by themselves, and began to move on their own!) (Nova)

(...Isn't that a splendid thing?) (Haine)

(No, it is not! Thanks to that, the children of those damn humans have stopped worshipping us!!) (Nova)

Ah.

It is exactly the same as what the Vice-captain Grades said at the Light Church.

With the birth of machines and the advance of civilization, people forget about God. It is still in the step where they are still on the verge of being forgotten.

(People forgetting about God is something that shouldn't happen! Humans should be dependent of Gods for eternity! And yet, they are insolently trying to escape from our hands! That's why we decided on bringing punishment to them!!) (Nova)

So that's where the monsters come in play.

Creating atrocious monsters that are out from the natural order, you had them attack humans.

That became a big problem, and the humans that were forced to do such a needless fight have delayed the advance of human civilization.

(I see. I understand the reason why you guys created monsters. Accurately speaking, that sophism of yours.

Well then, one other question.

Why did you even create heroes? The heroes, the light knight corps, the fire militant corps; that divine power they utilize was something you Gods gave to them, right?

If you created monsters in order to punish humans, why did you go through the trouble of giving humans the power to go against it?) (Haine)

(That wasn't my plan. Another guy said it. If the humans that have fallen into the threat of monsters are saved by the power of Gods, those fools would also remember their gratitude towards their God.) (Nova)

I see. This is something that's more in the alley of the cunning and clever Coacervate.

To think they would utilize such an underhanded method to maintain the faith of humans...

In this 1,600 years, Gods have really fallen low.

(But I...thought that method was too lukewarm.) (Nova)

.....

(There's no way a repeat of cornering and saving will get all the prayers back. What humans need is...fear. If their fear towards Gods is edged in them to the point that they can't say no, everything will be fine. Gratitude, trust, reverence, and love are not needed. All that's needed is for humans to fear God.) (Nova)

The God that has turned into a fire cow bellowed.

(Fear creates the purest of prayers. That's why, I took action. Like hell I would go acting all leisure like the others. I will teach all the humans how sinful it is to

forget about God!!) (Nova)

(Are you saying that's why you reincarnated as a monster?) (Haine)

(That's right! I created the strongest monster I could bring out with my power. This is the product of it! Dwelling in this thing that humans call fire cow Phalaris, I finished my preparations. Now it is only a matter of time. For the time when this body has grown to have plenty enough of my divine power!!) (Nova)

(Then!! The reason why the fire cow Phalaris acted differently from the other monsters and was staying in one place was because—!!) (Haine)

(I was waiting for its growth! But it may be time already. It would have been fine to get a bit bigger, but since you have come, this is a good chance!! Let's begin, the Divine Punishment to the humans that grew conceited!!) (Nova)

"Haine-san! Haine-san!! What's wrong, Haine-san?!"

I notice that Karen-san was shaking me by the shoulders.

Looks like I was immersed in the conversation with that guy.

"You suddenly stopped moving and was staring into the distance. The monster also suddenly stopped moving so that's fine but...you are being too carefree in the middle of a fight!" (Karen)

"Karen-san! It is true that there's already no time to waste!" (Haine)

"Eh?"

"That thing is also moving. To a point that it has never done before!!" (Haine)

It was at that same moment I said this...

The gigantic fire cow, a person would have to look up to see, stomped on the ground and walks while making the mountain tremble.

Until now, the most it has done was releasing heat, but now, it is stomping with all its legs and moving. Moreover, the direction it is headed to is...

"Impossible!!" (Mirack)

Mirack who was watching over the situation all this time, muttered with despair in it.

“The direction it is headed to is...the city where the Fire Church headquarters are located, Muspelheim!!” (Mirack)

Chapter 25: Dark God vs Fire God

Doshin Doshin

The cause of the ground trembling like an earthquake, is in truth, not because of an earthquake; it is the fire cow Phalaris who is shaking the ground with each step it takes with those legs.

“Why?! The fire cow Phalaris has never moved so actively before!” (Mirack)

Mirack, who was only watching over the situation all this time, muttered this.

“Is this the time to be absentminded?!” (Haine)

Shouting at Mirack who was actually absentminded, I run with my all.

In order to go after that damn cow.

“Where is that guy heading to?! If it’s you, you should know, right?! It is your homeland after all!” (Haine)

“Then, as I thought! That guy is really heading to Muspelheim...the city where the Fire Church headquarters are?!” (Mirack)

“Karen-san!” (Haine)

“Eh? Y-Yes!” (Karen)

Karen-san is being pulled along by me along with Mirack.

“I will hold it back! Karen-san and Mirack, search for a way to defeat that guy!” (Haine)

“Eeh?! No way! Defeating such a giant monster...”

“That’s the job of a hero, right?!” (Haine)

With that one roar, the legs of Karen-san and Mirack stop.

Leaving those girls behind, I increase my speed, and go around the front of this damn fire cow.

Even its head is several times bigger than my whole body. That kind of gigantic monster had both of its eyes directed at me.

(...You still have any business with me, Dark God?) (Nova)

That's right, this damn cow is one of the five Gods of Creation, the Fire God Nova.

The strongest monster he could create with his own hands, and reincarnated using his own soul. There's a pungent smell of him scheming something quite large-scale and bad.

(And so, where are you going? Are you moving with the knowledge that there's something in this direction?) (Haine)

(Of course. There's a big city of humans there, right? I am heading there to destroy it.) (Nova)

...As I thought huh.

(Are you serious? The city that's located there, Muspelheim, is the city where the main headquarters of the Fire Church are, you know? It is the city where the people who worship you gather. And you are going to destroy that place of all places?) (Haine)

(Doesn't matter. Humans that have forgotten to worship God are all equal sinners. Also, that city is not the only one I will be destroying. If I destroy around half of all humanity, they should be able to remember to fear God.) (Nova)

(You bastard! What you are doing is contradictory! Just because they are not worshipping you... If humans die, the prayers also go with them!) (Haine)

(Just means that people who don't worship us have no worth. No need to worry. Because of that needless thing called ethereal, humans have increased unnecessarily in numbers. Even if they are thinned out a bit, the remaining ones will remember the greatness of God and worship with everything they have. That way, prayer energy will flow a lot!!) (Nova)

...

(Looks like you Gods have not changed at all in these 1,600 years. Just like in the time we fought, you only look down on humans.) (Haine)

(Humans were created by God! That's a given! You eccentric Dark God that has reincarnated in such a human, get out of the way! I will be fulfilling my role

as a God!) (Nova)

(If I were someone that would get out of the way here, I wouldn't have fought with you guys 1,600 years ago. This is a bit sudden but, it can't be helped. Let's have a revenge match for that fight in the ancient times!) (Haine)

(So impudent. But Dark God, even if I have been reincarnated as a monster, I am still one of the almighty Gods. Even here, I can still destroy a city easily, you know?) (Nova)

Saying this, the fire cow opened its mouth wide.

Its body was big to begin with, so when it opened its giant mouth, the size of that opening was like that of a cave.

(Dark God, why do you think I created a giant monster? Moreover, having me reincarnate in it? The answer is...because unless it is this big, it wouldn't hold it all; the ability to utilize the power of a God.) (Nova)

(Could it be that you—?!) (Haine)

(Inside this steel cow, I have amassed my fire divine power. Hence, my big frame and steel skin. Look and marvel, the moment this power erupts!) (Nova)

From inside the giant opened mouth, a waving light is coming out.

([High Temperature Flash]!) (Nova)

What came out from the mouth of the fire cow was a giant flash that envelops everything.

And this was released towards me—no, that's not it. It was directed at what's directly at my back, the city of Muspelheim. Looking at the scale of that heat flash, the range is plenty enough. So his aim was there from the very beginning!

“Kugh! [Dark Matter, Set]!” (Haine)

Dark matter gushes out from my whole body. This spread out like a shield and meets the heat flash.

The fire and dark power clash. My dark matter shield was somehow able to block the high temperature flash.

(How annoying! This dark matter that erases the power of us Gods. To think it

would be able to block a full-force high temperature flash. Even when you have reincarnated as a minuscule human, that power of yours has not grown any less annoying huh, Dark God.) (Nova)

(That's why I have been telling you since long ago; humans are great.) (Haine)

(That greatness you talk about holds no point if it isn't of use for us Gods. It is true that this dark matter of yours is troublesome, but if you are devoting yourself to defense, I wonder, just how long will you be able to defend? [High Temperature Flash]!) (Nova)

The high temperature cannon was shot once again from the mouth of the fire cow.

I did nothing other than blocking it with the spread dark matter.

(So you are going to just block it again huh. Even though it would be easier to just avoid it. I already know. It is because if you avoid this High Temperature Flash, it will directly strike the human city that's at your back. It would wipe it out in one attack. To think you would be considerate to humans and be unable to show your full strength, as always, you are a foolish God!!) (Nova)

The fire cow Phalaris...that damn Fire God Nova is increasing the output of the High Temperature Flash, and I continue blocking it.

This is vexing, but my opponent is a God. Defending against the waves of attacks is taking my all and I can't find an opening to counterattack.

This is truly an endless loop.

When the opponent is a God and I am a God as well, this struggle is an obvious result.

That's why, there's the need of a different trigger in order to overturn this situation. The intervention of something that's not a God.

2 heroes.

The key to this battle's conclusion is being held by them.

Chapter 26: Passion Clad Lightning

I -the fire hero, Katak Mirack-was only able to look at that hellish scene absentmindedly.

“Why...did things turn out like this?”

I simply thought of a farce in order to drive away the annoying light hero and her lackey.

There’s no way someone can defeat the fire cow Phalaris.

Just like the subjugation battle that was carried out in the past, the human side was made to scatter and had to run back. The monster stayed in this land as if nothing happened.

That’s what should have happened now, and yet...this fire cow has taken a different action pattern from before. It grew active and has been utilizing attacks I have never seen before.

What’s with that high temperature flash?

If something like that had been used in the past, not a single one of the people in the subjugation force would have returned alive.

Moreover, the direction this high temperature flash was directed at was - without doubt-the place where Muspelheim is located.

That weird follower of the light hero was blocking this high temperature flash, and...that’s the number one thing I don’t understand, but...anyways, there’s still no fatal damage, but at this rate, the worst case scenario is right at the corner.

Even so, what can we do?

In front of such a fight that defies all common sense...

“Let’s do something, Mirack-chan!”

The girl at my side that was once my childhood friend said this.

“In the time Haine-san is blocking its attacks, we will defeat that fire cow!”
(Karen)

“What kind of stupid things are you spouting! Don’t joke around!” (Mirack)

I reflexively shouted this.

“Defeat that fire cow?! That’s obviously impossible! You have seen how out of bounds that giant cow’s power is, right?! It has already been proved that your light divine power has no effect on it. It has also been proven that my fire divine power has no effectivity against it since a long time ago!” (Mirack)

“We are heroes! Why is a hero the one who is giving up?!” (Karen)

“?!”

I was unable to say anything back at that.

Damn it. I ended up thinking what she said was right.

“Also, I have an idea. That attack a few moments ago, the attack to the joints of the fire cow was certainly effective.” (Karen)

“Such an attack that was like pricking with a needle? No matter how many times we repeat something like that, I don’t think it will bring it to its death, you know?” (Mirack)

The attack Karen did just now; concentrating the attack to its very limit, is something that the fire divine power can’t do.

This is like a specialty of each element, and it is certainly true that shooting at the joint areas where it is least resistant is effective, but the body of that cow is way too big to become a fatal strike.

“Also, I think it depends on the location we aim at. ‘Depending on the place the bee stings, it might even down a bear’, right?” (Karen)

“In that case, the location we should aim at is, as expected, the neck huh. It is a joint area and the armor there should be less, so if we are able to properly cut an artery, we might be able to kill it in one hit. That’s only if monsters follow the same logic as normal living beings, that is.” (Mirack)

“Let’s do it! Haine-san is doing his best blocking the attack, so us heroes can’t just stand around doing nothing!” (Karen)

That’s the number one thing I don’t understand though.

But the one that can't just be standing around the most is me.

The place that the fire cow is aiming at is the fire capital, Muspelheim. In that sense, this isn't directly related to the light hero Karen and her follower, and they can just ignore it.

And yet, they are the ones that are trying the most to stop the monster.

...The line that determines a true hero and a fake one.

The words that person said before remained in my chest even if I didn't like it.

I approach the fire cow, dragged by Karen. For that giant guy, we were like grass growing on the ground. And in this current state where it is facing that follower head on, it has no intention to pay us attention.

It means that we are not even worth its time.

"If we can properly get close to it, we can gift it with a real good one, right?"
(Karen)

".....No but, it doesn't seem that way though." (Mirack)

The more they get closer to the fire cow, the higher the temperature of the surrounding gets.

The waves of the high temperature flash are creating incredible heat. The earth and stones that are at its foot had already fused and became glass.

Humans jumping into such high heat would be akin to suicide.

"Getting closer than this is impossible. We have no choice but to aim at its neck from here." (Mirack)

"Eh?! We can't! No matter how concentrated the light divine power of the 'Holy Light Blade' is, even if we were to aim at a part that is least armored, piercing through it without being at close range is probably...impossible!"
(Karen)

Damn it, just how useless are we. Being called heroes when we are like this, what a bad joke.

...No, the only useless one here is me. Karen has the key to defeat the fire cow Phalaris.

Compared to that, if the one here were not me but the water hero, that person could reduce the temperature of the surroundings and safely allow Karen to reach the neck of the fire cow.

But I am unable to do something like that.

“Damn it... Damn it!!” (Mirack)

Self-deprecation came out from my out from mouth.

And then, in my anger, I grab the hand of Karen.

“?!! Mirack-chan?!” (Karen)

“Now that it has come to this, I will give you my divine power. Putting my divine power on top of yours and boosting the output, even in this distance, we might be able to pierce through the neck of that fire cow!” (Mirack)

“Eeh?! But Mirack-chan, it is possible to do that with the same element, but... our elements are fire and light, you know? They are different elements, you know?! Who knows what would happen by mixing them!!” (Karen)

“But there’s no other method than that! We don’t know how long that follower of yours can hold back the fire cow, and in the moment he is unable to, my city will be!!” (Mirack)

I am underhanded and a coward.

The reason for all this was because I brought them here in order to make them fail, and yet, now I am asking for their help to escape from my own crisis.

I know that I don’t have the right to ask anything of them, but...even so!!

“Let’s do it, Mirack-chan!!” (Karen)

The hand that was holding Karen, was held back with strength.

“We are heroes after all! There’s nothing we can’t do to protect the people!” (Karen)

I see.

This is what a true hero looks like.

It has nothing to do with strength. Nothing to do with pride.

In order to protect the powerless people, you can do anything huh.

That was the prerequisite to being a hero.

Just what have I been doing until now without even understanding that.

“Let’s go, Mirack-chan..... Holy sword, Saint-George, please grant me your light power!” (Karen)

“Yeah, Karen..... Fire fist, Barbarossa, please grant me your fire power!” (Mirack)

Just like the holy sword that was granted to Karen, I was also granted a holy weapon by the Fire Church. I pack divine power into the fire knuckle.

From now on, this mixing is a territory that no one has ever explored.

“Mirack-chan, thanks...” (Karen)

“Why are you thanking me? The one doing the thanking should be me...no, I should be apologizing.” (Mirack)

“Because I was able to hold the hand of Mirack-chan again.” (Karen)

Now that I think about it, just how long has it been since I have held the hand of Karen?

Leaving aside the time when her follower forcefully had us hold hands, I feel like when we were 4 or 5 years old, we would always hold hands when we were going to play.

Those days were cut away in that day when Karen suddenly disappeared.

I heard from the adults that Karen had entered the light church, in order to become the light hero.

It was then that I learned the word ‘hero’ for the first time.

“...Eh?”

No wait, wasn’t I aiming to become a hero since my childhood?

The trigger of that was... when I learned about heroes and what reason I aimed to become one.

I can’t remember well.

After that, only the harsh days of training pop in my mind.

‘Excessive effort will warp other things’, is what that follower said.

Does that mean I have really been forgetting something because of the harshness of those days?

What was it?

Looking at the side of Karen’s face, I remembered.

Ah, right.

I became a hero in order to stand by the side of Karen just like this.

I learned about heroes when I heard about Karen becoming one, so being in the same light church wouldn’t work. In each church, only one hero is chosen. That’s why I entered the Fire Church.

It is not like my fire element number was high since the beginning. I covered it with blood-curling effort. But that blood-curling effort made me forget something important.

When I became a hero and reunited with Karen after several years, I told this to her: ‘You are not a friend, you are an enemy’.

Why did I say something like that? Did the harsh training in the Fire Church change my heart as well?

The fire hero has to compete against the other churches. Being affected by that unwritten law, I ended up seeing Karen as an enemy.

Even though my past self didn’t wish for something like that.

Even though I didn’t aim to become a hero for something like that.

‘Excessive effort will warp other things’.

“Karen, I...!” (Mirack)

For some reason, in this precarious situation, I remembered so many things and I couldn’t hold my tears as they overflow.

“I love you, Mirack-chan!” (Karen) <No guys, this is not yuri.>

“Me too!” (Mirack)

Our divine power begins to mix along with our hearts.

Light and fire; the feeling of divine powers that shouldn't be mixed originally.

A chant naturally rose into my mind.

""[Divine Fire-Light, Thunder]!""

Chapter 27: God's Divine Punishment

(Gyaaaaaa!!!!)

“Bumoooooo!!!”

I -Kuromiya Haine-was feeling as if my body and spirit were both screaming.

The Fire God Nova and the fire cow Phalaris; to put it bluntly, they are the same existence, but for what reason is it screaming in such a painful manner?

(W-What was that shock just now?! It hurts! It stings! What in the world is this?!) (Nova)

I follow the gaze of the fire cow and notice it as well.

Karen-san and Mirack; the two are holding hands and are using that hand to aim at the fire cow.

“One more shot, Karen!” (Mirack)

“Yeah, Mirack-chan!” (Karen)

““[Divine Fire-Light, Thunder]!””

From the linked hand of the two, a light is shot.

That's light divine power? No, it is not. There's something added to the light?

(Gugeeee!!)

And again, Nova and the fire cow let out screams.

(W-Why?! This steel skin that I have manufactured for the sake of this body isn't supposed to be receiving any wounds from something like the mere divine power given to humans! Gugegege?!!) (Nova)

In that time, I noticed.

“...Combined elements.” (Haine)

The light element and the fire element; by mixing two different elements, a completely different elemental divine power was born.

(Light and fire; by combining these two, what came out of it was 'Lightning')

element.) (Haine)

(Lightning element?!)(Nova)

(Your steel skin...was actual steel huh. That's why it conducts the electricity, and it is damaging your body directly. Their attacks are already not pointless against you.) (Haine)

"It is working! I don't understand well, but it is working, Mirack-chan!"
(Karen)

"Yeah! There's already no need to aim for an opening!! Let's hit it with all we got!!" (Mirack)

""[Divine Fire-Light, Thunder]!""

(Ugyaaaa!!! Stop iittt!!) (Nova)

Nova screams, but the cow-shaped monster is only going moo moo, so Karen-san and Mirack won't understand what's saying.

(Why?! Why?! Combining elements should be an impossible deed for us Gods!) (Nova)

(That's because...you guys don't get along. If you don't overlap your hearts perfectly, it would be impossible to mix your elements to this extent.) (Haine)

(Stop it! I am a God! The Fire God that gave you power, fire hero! Are you going to point your fangs at the one you worship?!)(Nova)

(You are currently not a God, but a monster. A sinful monster that's trying to destroy the people they are trying to protect. What's wrong about pummeling someone like that?) (Haine)

(Don't spout stupid things! Humans are the slaves of God! Gods are free to use humans in whatever way they wish. Whether it is killing them, or playing around with them—! Eh?) (Nova)

(Looks like you finally noticed. That I have approached you till the very front of your face. Nova, you damn fire cow, the moment you received the combined attack of Karen-san and Mirack, you stopped your high temperature flash attacks after all. Thanks to that, I didn't need to use a dark matter shield, and was able to freely move.) (Haine)

"In this stalemate, you were at the edge as well." (Haine)

(...U-Uhm.) (Nova)

“You must have understood as well, right? By having me block your high temperature flash, you managed to pin me down in place, and there would be no fear of me fighting back. Fighting back with the dark matter that I create.”
(Haine)

(Entropy-san, wait. Please listen to what I have to say!!) (Nova)

“Don’t call me with that name. Right now, I am the human, Kuromiya Haine.”
(Haine)

(Yes!! Uhm, Haine-san...!) (Nova)

“You didn’t forget, right? In the battle of Gods, even when I had five Gods as my enemies, I managed to fight on even grounds. You know just how fearsome my dark matter that’s able to erase all divine power is, just how painful it will be to be punched by it, right?” (Haine)

(Wait, please. Weren't we real good pals in the past? As fellow Gods, how about we get alo—) (Nova)

“I was unable to move because of the high temperature flash, but thanks to the heroes, I was able to get this close. To a distance where my fist can reach. It is true that I am the unknown Dark God, but I am still a God. The punishment I hand down is without doubt divine punishment. Now then, Fire God Nova...”
(Haine)

This time, it is your turn to receive divine punishment.

[illegible]

(Gugeeeeeeeh!! Gyaaaaaaa!!!)

Countless punches were striking the giant body of the fire cow.

Of course, they weren't normal punches. They are punches clad with dark matter.

The dark matter goes from my fist and penetrates the body of the fire cow.

(The dark matter is—! The dark matter is entering my body!! I am being erased!! My fire divine power is steadily being erased!!) (Nova)

Monsters were created by the Gods in order to harass humans; living beings that are outside the natural order of the world.

Their identity is that of a mass of divine power.

That's why, when they die, they will disappear just like that; if they come in contact with the dark matter that erases divine power, their volume will die out, and just like that.....they are erased.

Chapter 28: Sealing the Fire God

By the time I had my fill of punching him a whole lot, Karen-san and Mirack ran to where I am.

They are still holding hands. Looks like they got quite close in the time I wasn't looking.

"Haine-san! Are you okay?!" (Karen)

"What about the fire cow?! I can't see that guy. Just what happened?!"
(Mirack)

The heroes ask questions in rapid succession.

"Well, if it's the fire cow Phalaris, it is here." (Haine)

I point at the ground, and with that, the gaze of the two heroes were led by it.

"This is...?!"

"It shrunk..."

At that place, there's a fainted fire cow Phalaris that has all extremities twitching.

But, it is small.

It is incomparably smaller than the time we encountered it. It is one whole size smaller than a normal calf.

If asked how it ended up in this way, it is because of the dark matter that I continuously hit him with.

As the dark matter that destroys the divine power entered its body, the fire divine power that composed the body of this guy was erased thoroughly, and as a result, its volume decreased and can't even spit out fire anymore.

It is a mystery how it got several times as small as this, but it is the type of mystery that doesn't matter.

I have already completely erased the fire God hearth that was inside of it, and it can't release heat anymore.

We splendidly achieved the subjugation of the fire cow Phalaris.

“This guy...because of this guy, our city was almost about to be destroyed!!”
(Mirack)

Mirack runs towards it with anger seething.

“I will be finishing it! Bringing an end to the monster that has been destroying this land for so many years, that’s my duty as the fire hero!” (Mirack)

The arm that was equipped with the knuckle was the very definition of a blunt weapon.

Even if she didn’t concentrate divine power in it, if she were to punch with something like that, it would easily destroy the cranium of Phalaris who has become as small as a calf.

That’s why, I grab her arm and...stop her.

“Wait. Killing it would be a waste.” (Haine)

“What’s the meaning of this?! Why did you stop me?!” (Mirack)

“The fire cow Phalaris has already lost all of its destructive power. The massive fire divine power inside of it has disappeared, and with this small body, it won’t even be able to step on a dog. In other words, it is in a state that’s completely harmless.” (Haine)

“And what of it?! Even if it’s harmless, a monster is still a monster—” (Mirack)

“That’s exactly why. How about exhibiting it and show it around the normal populace?” (Haine)

“?!!” “?!!” (?!!)

Not only Mirack and Karen-san, even the related party was showing surprise as they open their eyes wide.

“Monsters will disappear once they are killed anyways. Then, before that, showing a weakened monster like this to the people would make it easier for them to get a feel of it. That ‘the monster has been defeated’.” (Haine)

“That might be true, but...” (Mirack)

“It can turn into a good event for the church and it can serve as publicity as

well. It might increase the number of recruits.” (Haine)

(Wait wait wait! Dark God Entropy! Is your aim possibly...?!)(Nova)

At that moment, a voice I could only hear came from the inside of the fire cow Phalaris.

What’s inside this fire cow is the Fire God Nova. Being seen as one of the five Gods of Creation, it arbitrarily got angered at the humans who had thinned their faith towards him and tried to bring divine punishment by reincarnating in a monster; in other words, an idiot.

For that sake, he reincarnated in the fire cow Phalaris that he created himself and tuned to its very limits, but now that the transcendent power has been erased by my dark matter without leaving a single trace behind, the current him is lower than a cow.

The soul of the Fire God Nova probably already wants to be liberated from this useless body and return to the God realm.

(As I thought, you are really—!)(Nova)

(That’s right. I won’t be letting you go so easily, damn God.

Your soul that has been reincarnated will not be liberated unless its vessel has died. In other words, until you die, you will have to continue living as a cow!)(Haine)

(As I thought! You...you intend to seal me in this cow body!! This Fire God Nova!!)(Nova)

(Having you easily return to the God realm and have you scheme a new mischief would be unpleasant. So, calling it sealing is not that wrong. Fire God Nova who has his soul sealed inside a powerless imitation of a cow.

I will count this as revenge for sealing me in the past.) (Haine)

(You damn ogre! Demon! God of darkness!! Just kill me already! Kill me and return me to the God Realm right this instant! This Fire God Nova, one of the

rulers of this world, living as a pitiful and powerless cow is just...!) (Nova)

(Well, if you don't like it, find an opportunity to kill yourself. I will be doing my best in stopping you every time you try it though. I will tie a rope around your neck and pull you as you go 'moo moo' in pointless struggle.

Let's drag you back to the Fire Church just like this. It will be mostly by foot. Don't think you will be getting a favorable treatment like having you ride a horse carriage.) (Haine)

"...U-Understood. This is unheard of but, what you say does have a point. I will try talking with the people of the Fire Church. But, can I ask you one question?" (Mirack)

"Yes?" (Haine)

"Haine-san, just what in the world are you?" (Karen)

The one who asked me the question was Karen-san who interrupted the words of Mirack.

With an even more worried face than that of her recovered friendship with Mirack.

"I scouted you thinking that you could become a reliable comrade. But you have surpassed my expectations way too many times. Leaving aside your decisiveness in fixing my friendship with Mirack-chan...you blocked the heat flash of that gigantic monster and beat it up until it became this small. That's not normal." (Karen)

"I also wanted to ask that. I only thought of you as a follower of Karen but, just what are you? At the very least, you are a hero or something that surpasses that. Moreover, that power I saw from afar...that thing that I can only describe as a pitch black-something, it was not fire divine power or light divine power, it wasn't wind, water, and earth either." (Mirack)

Well, as expected, they could see how I was using my dark matter.

How should I explain it?

I reincarnated in this world and wanted to interact with it as a human, so I

can't just announce that 'I am the reincarnation of the Dark God!'.

In the first place, is the existence of the Dark God even known?

"Then, I will explain it."

The voice of a third party resonates.

Chapter 29: Light Princess, Dark Hero

“Who is it?!”

In this place that was recently the territory of an atrocious monster, the presence of a person was felt.

When we look at that place, there’s the figure of a familiar woman with pure snow white priest robe covering her body.

“You are...Yorishiro-sama?!” (Karen)

“Yorishiro?! The current founder of the Light Church, that Yorishiro?!”
(Mirack)

Hearing that name, Mirack showed visible agitation.

“Eh? You know about that person?” (Haine)

“Or more like, you don’t know about her? You are a member of the Light Church, aren’t you?!” (Mirack)

I am a beansprout that recently joined it though.

“...Well, I do know. That person is famous after all.” (Mirack)

“I see.” (Haine)

“Of course, just by being a founder, you are famous, but that Yorishiro alone is special. She is a woman after all, moreover, an exceptional case where she obtained the position of a founder in the young age of 18. The rumors say that she kicked her father who was the previous founder into the extremities of a political strife. She is famously known as a ‘scary woman’.” (Mirack)

Is she someone like that?

She is covered by a robe and a veil, so I can’t see most of her skin at all, but I can tell from her atmosphere alone that she is a beauty.

That Yorishiro send a gaze to us through her veil.

“First of all, our hero Karen-san. Good work in the subjugation of the fire cow Phalaris. And the fire hero Mirack-san who cooperated as well, I give you my

thanks as the light church's founder." (Yorishiro)

"Ah...well..." (Mirack)

The characteristic solemnity that Yorishiro exudes is overwhelming Mirack as well.

"More importantly, Yorishiro-sama, what did you mean with those words just now?" (Karen)

Karen-san who is the one in this group that is the most acquainted with her asks her boldly.

"I am also baffled by Yorishiro-sama being in this kind of place, but what you said about 'explaining', can I take it as you saying you will be explaining what Haine-san is?" (Karen)

"Of course, hero. For the sake of that, let me ask one question first. Hero Karen, do you know about the Gods that created this world?" (Yorishiro)

"Eh?"

Being asked so suddenly, Karen-san also gets confused.

"Of course, it is the five Gods of Creation. The Light Goddess Inflation we follow, the Fire God Nova, Water God Coacervate, Wind God Quasar, and the Mother Earth Mantle, right?" (Karen)

"That's right. But what if there's not only five Gods of Creation?" (Yorishiro)

"Eh?"

At that question, not only Karen-san, Mirack also raised a shocked voice.

"There's one other God of Creation. That God's name is Entropy, the God that governs darkness." (Yorishiro)

"Impossible!" (Mirack)

Finally, Mirack couldn't take it anymore and interjected.

"Like hell I could believe that?! There being another God of Creation is just... moreover, a God of Darkness that sounds evil no matter how you hear it..." (Mirack)

“Fire hero, Mirack-san. Darkness in itself is by no means evil. In this world, half of it is covered by it in the night along with the day. The sleep that people take. That is the domain of the darkness, but it is also a necessary time for humans to rest.” (Yorishiro)

“Uh, that’s...” (Mirack)

“But Yorishiro-sama, if this Dark God Entropy really exists, why didn’t we know of it until now? Like a Dark Church equal to that of the other Gods. Wouldn’t it be fine to have one?” (Karen)

“That just means Entropy is that much of a special God. But, no matter how much of a hidden God it is, the darkness part that composes this world exists. In humans as well.” (Yorishiro)

“There’s a darkness part in humans as well?” (Karen)

“Hero Karen, just like how your light element is prominent, and the fire hero there excels in fire element, there’s also humans who possess great dark element in their body. A person that has been born with big darkness power is...” (Yorishiro)

“Could that be...”

“Is it possible that...”

The gaze of Karen-san and Mirack turn towards me.

“That’s right. Haine-san was born with strong inherent dark element and is a person that can control that power; in other words, the hero of darkness.” (Yorishiro)

...’How is that?’

The gaze of Yorishiro was telling me this as she looked straight at me.

At that moment, I was sure, about the identity of this founder of the Light Church, Yorishiro.

This one is the same, the same as me. And while on it, she is also the same as that cow that lays fallen on the ground.

Yorishiro is a human, and at the same time, not a human. Her soul is not that

of a human.

Something that's not human, in other words, a God that has reincarnated in the body of a human.

Light Goddess, Inflation.

So you reincarnated into a human as well.

Chapter 30: The reunion of Gods comes to an end for now

...After that, we separated in order to perform our own duties.

Mirack pulled the fire cow Phalaris that has turned small and returned to Muspelheim where the Fire Church is.

That useless cow will be under the care of the Fire Church, and just as I proposed, they will have him displayed to the public in a few days.

Mirack herself also formally accepted to cooperate with Karen-san.

Rather than this being because we were able to fulfill the condition of defeating the fire cow, it was more because she herself had a change in mindset.

Being able to fix her broken friendship with Mirack, Karen-san was happy from the bottom of her heart.

But well, this talk about heroes cooperating with each other has not gone through the acceptance of the Light Church itself, so it will probably be getting troublesome from here on.

Even so, this is a talk for the future.

Karen-san, who was all tired from the monster subjugation, returned to her room as soon as she got back to the Light Church and apparently went right to sleep without even taking a bath.

And then, I...

“Even you reincarnated. I didn’t know about that.” (Haine)

The room of the Light Church’s founder.

In reality, it is a room where only a few chosen ones can enter; in other words, I am in sacred precincts.

I was in the room of the Light Church’s founder with only the two of us.

The founder herself is a young woman. In normal circumstances, a situation

like this would be impossible.

“You said you would be reincarnating as a human, so I hurriedly followed you—
desu wa.” (Yorishiro)

Is what the young founder said.

Maybe because she is in her own room, she has taken off the veil she always has on. It is a face that definitely enters in the category of beauty, but unfortunately, thinking about her inside, I can't be charmed by it.

【世直し暗黒神の奔走キャララフ：ヨリシロ】



That's right, the identity of the founder Yorishiro is the reincarnation of the Light Goddess, Inflation.

One of the five Gods of Creation that sealed me 1,600 years ago, and also the very same person that undid the seal 18 years ago.

After that, I decided on reincarnating as a human and became Kuromiya Haine but, she also reincarnated as a human?

Moreover, she became the founder of the Light Church that follows her.

"And so, why?" (Haine)

"What do you mean by why?" (Yorishiro)

"About the reason why you reincarnated as a human." (Haine)

"Of course, because I wanted to enjoy being a human together with you-desu wa." (Yorishiro)

Saying this, the Light Goddess Inflation...I mean, Yorishiro came at me with her ripen body.

"Oooi?!" (Haine)

"This inconvenient flesh restricts us, but with it, there's also pleasures we can enjoy that we couldn't as Gods-desu wa. For example, giving birth to the child of your loved one." (Yorishiro)

"Oryaaa!" (Haine)

I hurriedly jump aside and take my distance from Yorishiro.

"Leaving aside the joking, I want to enter the real matter." (Haine)

"Ara, I was serious-desu wa yo. Just how long have I waited for the day I would meet your human self. We will have to make the preparations for the wedding announcement..." (Yorishiro)

"Stop it!!" (Haine)

This woman, did her animal instincts get even denser when she became a human?

"At any rate, I am surprised you were able to line up such a lie. That thing

about being the hero of darkness.” (Haine)

“It is a setting I thought up since long before-desu wa. I thought that there would definitely be a time when you would gather the attention of the world. That’s also the reason why I obtained the position of founder. Authority is the best catalyst to reinforce persuasion after all.” (Yorishiro)

It might be just as Yorishiro says.

The existence of the Dark God Entropy, since the time I was sealed at the creation era, no one ever knew of me.

And then, if after 1,600 years there’s a shocking revelation like there being ‘one other God of Creation’, it would be hard to believe. Karen-san and Mirack who heard about it were in part able to believe it mostly because those were the words of the founder of the Light Church.

“If I were to say ‘this is an oracle from the Light Goddess’, they would have obediently believed it. What innocent children-desu wa.” (Yorishiro)

“Rather than an oracle, they are the words of the person herself though...” (Haine)

At any rate, thanks to Yorishiro calming down the situation, I was able to evade the questioning of Karen-san and Mirack. But it is not like I have avoided all the questioning.

“It has been revealed that there’s the power of dark matter after all.” (Haine)

“Isn’t that fine-desu ka? A special power that can only be used by one person in the world. Something as renowned as that will resound in the whole world-desu wa. You will be doing a lot of things in the future anyways, right?” (Yorishiro)

“I won’t...is what I want to say, but...” (Haine)

Since leaving the countryside a few days ago, I have learned about a lot of things in this world.

The civilization that grew with the discovery of a material called ethereal. And because of it, the Gods are being left behind, and they are trying a variety of ways to change that flow.

Even if you cut off a few humans, the problems that will be born in this organization called a church will continue appearing.

I can't just stay unrelated to that. I am not the Dark God Entropy, but Kuromiya Haine who came from the countryside.

"It is true that if becoming somewhat famous in the human world will bring benefits to it, there's no reason to be against it. Let's do our best from now on as well. Just like how the humans in this world do their best to live in it." (Haine)

"You will be involving yourself in this world, not as a God, but a human huh. That's just like you, Haine-san." (Yorishiro)

"And so, that's how it is. I am counting on you from here on out as well, Founder-sama. I am supposed to be your subordinate after all." (Haine)

"If you so wish, I can provide you a position that's a lot higher than that-desu wa. You will be staying the night here, right?" (Yorishiro)

"I won't!" (Haine)

I escape from the room of the founder, and retire.

And so, like this, my life as the human -Kuromiya Haine-genuinely begins.